OPEN ACCESS

University of BRISTOL

This electronic thesis or dissertation has been downloaded from Explore Bristol Research, http://research-information.bristol.ac.uk

Author:
Bendall, Jeremy Christopher

Title:
In our power : the civilisation of globalisation

General rights
Access to the thesis is subject to the Creative Commons Attribution - NonCommercial-No Derivatives 4.0 International Public License. A copy of this may be found at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode This license sets out your rights and the restrictions that apply to your access to the thesis so it is important you read this before proceeding.

Take down policy
Some pages of this thesis may have been removed for copyright restrictions prior to having it been deposited in Explore Bristol Research. However, if you have discovered material within the thesis that you consider to be unlawful e.g. breaches of copyright (either yours or that of a third party) or any other law, including but not limited to those relating to patent, trademark, confidentiality, data protection, obscenity, defamation, libel, then please contact collections-metadata@bristol.ac.uk and include the following information in your message:

• Your contact details
• Bibliographic details for the item, including a URL
• An outline nature of the complaint

Your claim will be investigated and, where appropriate, the item in question will be removed from public view as soon as possible.

In Our Power: The Civilisation of Globalisation

Jeremy (Jem) Christopher Bendall

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of PhD in the Faculty of Social Science, School for Policy Studies, March 2003.

111, 556 words
(excluding footnotes, annexes and bibliography)

ABSTRACT

This thesis is about civil society, which is defined as the sphere of participation for our common good. Moreover, by writing this thesis the author aims to participate in civil society by shaping discourse in ways that liberate human potential. Key here is the development of an activist research methodology, called civil action-research, which also informs the writing of the thesis, resulting in a unique way of presenting the material to the reader. The author asks 'what is the influence of civil society on business in a global economy for our common good?' This is investigated in the context of corporate responses to campaigns on social and environmental issues, with detailed case studies of sustainable management, ethical trading and social auditing initiatives in the international banana trade. 'Influence' is analysed using sociological theories of power, including four dimensions of power. The author finds each dimension helpful in understanding relations between companies and groups in civil society, and warns that discourse should not always be assumed to be facilitative. Those participating for our common good, defined as civil groups and actors, are shown to have different forms of power over and with business, yet in exerting this power they are shown to be themselves subject to power. Moreover, some civil groups and actors are shown to have more power than others in shaping corporate responses to campaigning, so they often marginalise others with an interest in the changes taking place. The benefits and drawbacks for civil groups from their engagement with business, and from their gaining power, reveal a paradox of civil action. Paradox is identified as inherent in any action and any conceptualisation of society, and the author discusses implications of this for activists and civil action researchers.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original, except where indicated by special reference in the text, and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other academic award. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED: ..... DATE: 1/3/03

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis adds to a family of research that has grown out of the geographical location of Bristol and Bath, UK, and the intellectual location of action research into organisational change for sustainable development and social progress. This 'B&B School' was shaped by the research and teaching of international policy and management responsibility at the University of Bristol's School for Policy Studies, and of organisational change at the University of Bath's School of Management. Tom Davies, Danny Burns, Sue Barrett, Gill Coleman, Malcolm McIntosh, Peter Reason, and a variety of PhD graduates such as Rupesh Shah and David Murphy have all played a part in this family of research, and therefore some of the thinking in this thesis. With many of these now associated with the New Academy of Business and the Journal of Corporate Citizenship, this family of research has broadened and diversified. Today a global network of people are enriching and being enriched with our work through the initiatives such as the joint Bath/New Academy Masters course, and through the growing recognition of action research methodologies. Given the different people and organisational settings involved there are different strands of thought, but there seems to be a core, which remains. At the heart of the B&B School has been the desire to be explorers of emotion as much as researchers of organisation, and to continually question one's practice and experience in order to bring about social change. This thesis marks a departure in that it focuses on civil society organisations and attempts to explore the systems (the rules and processes that shape what we can or can't do) as much as the agents of change (i.e. us); yet I hope it will further enrich the growing family of research.

In addition to the 'family B&B' Id like to thank the following, who have also played a part in the learning that, in very different ways, has shaped this thesis. For example, Brian Sherwin, Marina Prieto, Phyllida Cox, Roba El-Ghadban and Rik Strong explored the issues I raised in this thesis or gave me encouragement that I was doing something worthwhile. Rupesh Shah read through a draft and commented in detail, helping me to go to another level in my final conclusions. Virginia Rodriguez introduced me to endnotes and helped with the referencing, as well as making important comments on the text and encouraging me. Justin MacDermot also made helpful comments. Tom Davies was there to advise when I needed, and not when not, which I realise from talking to other PhD students with overbearing supervisors was a great blessing. My examiners, Alex Marsh and Marilyn Taylor made many helpful comments for preparing the final version. Olman Segura made it possible for me to be a Visiting Professor at Universidad Nacional, and Miriem Miranda helped organise interviews while I was there. Alistair Smith, David McClaughlin, Carlos Vega and Chris Wille were particularly helpful 'in the field'. At different times Peter Utting, Michael Edwards, Alan Fowler, Georg Kell, John Stuart, among others, were supportive of what I was writing about. There were many others who provided information, gave interviews, asked questions, exchanged emails, chatted over lunch or dinner, or otherwise helped stimulate or encourage my thinking. Many of you are mentioned in the text. Peter, Veronica and Mark - thanks for the encouragement.

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Aspen Institute's Non-Profit Sector Research Fund made this research possible with their financial support.

I dedicate this dissertation to all the banana workers who will never read it. May it, in some small way, help us to see the day when their children can write their own.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABLH - Association of Better Land Husbandry
AECO - Costa Rican Friends of the Earth
AGM - Annual General Meetings
ATO - Alternative Trading Organisation
BBC - British Broadcasting Corporation
BBP - Better Banana Project
BSR - Business for Social Responsibility
BVQI - Bureau Veritas Quality Inspection
CAFOD - Catholic Fund for Overseas Development
CAN - Conservation Agriculture Network
CAR - Corrective Action Request
CAWN - Central America Women's Network
CEP - Council on Economic Priorities
CEPAA - Council on Economics Priorities Accreditation Agency
CINPE - Centro Internacional de Politica Economica para el Desarrollo Sostenible
CNN - Cable News Network
COBAL - Compañía Bananera Atlántica Limitada
COLSIBA - The Coordinadora Latinoamericana de Sindicatos Bananeros
CREA - Center for Reflection, Education and Action
CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility
DfID - Department for International Development
DJSGI - Dow Jones Sustainability Group Index
DMFP - Del Monte Fresh Produce
DSA - Development Studies Associations
EDF - Environmental Defense Fund
ETI - Ethical Trading Initiative
EU - European Union
FLA - Fair Labor Association
FLO - Fairtrade Labelling Organisation
FSC - Forest Stewardship Council
FTLO - Fair-trade labelling organisation
GDP - Gross Domestic Product
GM - genetically modified
GMIES - Independent Monitoring Group of El Salvador
GSK - GlaxoSmithKlein
IAF - International Accreditation Forum
ICA - Institute of Contemporary Arts
ICCR - Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility
ICEM - International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Worker's Unions
ICFTU - International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IDS - Institute of Development Studies
IFBWW - International Federation of Building and Wood Workers
IFG - International Forum on Globalisation
ILO - International Labour Organisation
IMF - International Monetary Fund
IMWG - Independent Monitoring Working Group
IR - International relations
IRET - National University's Regional Institute on Toxic Substances
ISEA - Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability
ISEAL - International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance
ISO - International Organisation for Standardisation
1SO14001 - Environmental management standard
ISTR - International Society for Third Sector Research
ITGLWF - International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Federation
IUF - International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations
JHU - John Hopkins University
LSE - London School of Economics
MEP - Member of the European Parliament
MINAE - Ministry of Energy and Environment
MSC - Marine Stewardship Council
MSF - Medecins Sans Frontieres
MSN - Maquila Solidarity Network
MVWG - Monitoring and Verification Working Group
NEF - New Economics Foundation
NGO - Non-Governmental Organisations
NRI - Natural Resources Institute
PhD - Doctor of Philosophy
PNA - Page Not Available
PR - Public Relations
PRA - Public Rural Appraisal
PVH - Phillips-Van Heusen
PwC - PriceWaterhouseCoopers
SA8000 - Labour standard of SAI
SAI - Social Accountability International
SGS - Mulitnational Inspection Firm
SITAGAH - Costa Rican Banana Union
SITRAP - Costa Rican Banana Union
SRI - Socially Responsible Investment
TGC - TransGovernmental Corporation
TUC - Trades Union Congress
UCCAEP - Union of Costa Rican Private-Sector Chambers and Associations
UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme
UNI - Union Network International
UNRISD - United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
UPEB - Union of Banana Exporting Countries
WBCSD - World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WDM - World Development Movement
WHO - World Health Organization
WRAP - Worldwide Responsible Apparel Partnership
WRC - Workers Rights Consortium
WTO - World Trade Organisation
WWF-UK - World Wide Fund for Nature UK

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE. My Introduction.

As a final year PhD student I sometimes found myself being asked for advice by people who were just starting-out. My response was to ask them a simple question - *why?* Why, why, why, when there are so many other things in the world we could be doing, *why* spend 3, maybe 5 years on a PhD?[1] That didn't always come across as helpful advice, but I believe the most important thing for researchers to ask themselves is why they are doing what they're doing. To bring this out into the open can have startling affects on the research topic (Marshall 1999). One reason might be to get a PhD and become an academic. But why? Imagine a conversation with a child who has just mastered that word:

Child:	"But why do you want to be an academic?"
Researcher:	"Because I like teaching"
Child:	"But Why?"
Researcher:	"Because I like helping people to learn"
Child:	"But Whyyy?"
Researcher:	"Because I want to help them be better people"
Child:	"But Whhyyy?"
Researcher:	"Because it's good to help people"
Child:	"But Whhhyyy...?"
Researcher:	"It's just the way I feel"
Child:	"But...?"
Researcher:	"Look, I don't know, its just something about who I am, OK?"

I began writing this in the year 2001. At the time we did not often talk about our values in the context of our work. Ethics, love and spirit were important to many people, but we kept them private, stored safely in the home, or in churches and temples – certainly not something we talked about at the office. That wouldn't have been 'professional'. This compartmentality of keeping emotions in one box and work in another was something we had to get over. But perhaps the biggest barrier was that it just seemed kind of weird to talk like this (and maybe you're cringing now). Such was the state of our society, selling out was not only accepted by most of my college contemporaries, it was considered a right of passage. If you hadn't sold out you hadn't really grown up. Or you were just pretending and were really doing it for the money and travel. Caring about real social issues? That was boring. It was far more interesting to be ironic and read silly magazines. And if you questioned people's values you were just being nasty or boring. Or both.

---

[1] Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury (2001) noted at the time that "the purpose of knowledge-making is so rarely debated. The institutions of normal science and academia, which have created such a monopoly on the knowledge making process, place a primary value on pure research, the creation of knowledge unencumbered by practical questions." At no stage in the formal PhD training modules were we students asked the question "why do we want knowledge?" This silence was indicative of the dominant positivist-empiricist discourse in my University, and all of social science, as discussed in Chapter 4. (Please note that I do not have the page numbers for some texts, as they were online, or emailed to me in electronic format. The latter was the case for the previous reference. I give page numbers for quotations when available.)

If Jesus Christ were to come today, people would not even crucify him. They would ask him to dinner, and hear what he had to say, and make fun of it.

Thomas Carlyle

However, I did care and *my* need for meaning and purpose was why I sat down to write these words. For a time I struggled to find the motivation necessary to write this thesis. Then I realised why. I had already written a couple of books and contributed a regular column in a journal, and was motivated about doing those. I realised that my enthusiasm stemmed from my belief in the power of ideas to change things for the better. Writing can be an act of philanthropy -- those who have money can give money, those who have ideas can give ideas. My problem with finding the motivation to write a PhD thesis was because for the first time my writing was not going to be that act of philanthropy, but rather a means of obtaining a qualification. Then it dawned on me.

Until that point I had been doing an 'action-research' PhD, underpinned by my concern for the subject matter and a desire to catalyse change through the research process. So why stop now? Why try to be *professional* and remove the 'action' when writing up the research? As I will explain in Chapter 4, commentators on action-research had not reflected on the methodological implications of *writing the research* as much as the process of the research itself.[2] As an action-researcher, why spend months writing something that will be read only by examiners and then sit in a library vault gathering dust? And so I pondered what could be a significant contribution to make. What would be of interest, not just to the three people who were going to be paid to examine my work, but a wider audience?

Writing is precisely the very possibility of change, the space that can serve as a springboard for subversive thought.

Helene Cixous
(The Laugh of Medusa)

So what you are about to read was energised by my desire to write in -- and about -- a new form of academic prose. In consequence this is *my* introduction, and I'll spend a few lines reflecting on my own personal "why". This responds to the call for action-researchers to describe our 'way of being' in the world at the start of our academic writing (Reason and Bradbury 2001).

My Why

One summer evening I was having dinner with an old school friend, his wife and newborn child. An evangelical Christian, Edward was stirred by his faith to work with AIDS sufferers in London. When I gave him a copy of my book *Terms for Endearment* (Bendell 2000c), he asked me why I

[2] For example, the most comprehensive compilation on action-research, as participative inquiry and practice (Reason and Bradbury 2001) does not discuss in depth the act of writing up action-research. Consideration of this is limited to describing how to write a 'learning history' that can be shared with research participants. This does not address whether, and how, to write for a wider audience.

was so into issues of environment, human rights, international development and business ethics, and why I wanted to write books about them. I hadn't really ever tried to put into words my reason before that point, but the words that came out were that I felt it was my own 'calling', and what I was doing was compatible with Christian beliefs. To illustrate, I read him the concluding paragraph from the book, a quote from the International NGO's Forum at the Earth Summit in 1992. I had asked readers to "reflect on its truth and consider its calling" (ibid, p. 254):

> *We the people of the world will mobilise the forces of transnational civil society behind a widely shared agenda that bonds our many social movements in pursuit of just, sustainable and participatory human societies. (International NGO Forum 1992)*

I remember he said that yes, by 'truth' and 'calling', it sounded like I was talking about God's *work*, but not about God, and not about *why*.

I was reminded of this conversation when I was in a conference on 'sustainable business'. Many participants talked about their 'epiphany', the point when they realised that something was wrong with the world (and their lives) and that they had to do something about it - within their company. The CEO of Interface, Ray Anderson, said that his epiphany was when agreed to talk about the future of the world. He didn't know what he was going to say, so he read a book by Paul Hawken (1993) called *The Ecology of Commerce.* Upon reading that he decided he had to change the way his company did business.

This talk about epiphany made me think - what was mine? What is my why? I started working on these issues from the age of 15. I think it may have been because of a couple of books I had read, and even that Christian holiday camp I had been on, that I became very involved with the poverty and environmental crises covered in my Geography classes. I even read a biography of Mother Teresa, where she was quoted as saying "it's not what you do, but how much love you put into doing it." Her attitude clashed vividly with the utilitarian view of society so dominant at the time. It emphasised to me the importance of *motivation* and *why* we do things.[3]

The Christian holiday camps had made me realise the incredible energy that comes from 'spirituality' and the amazing positivity that lies inside every one of us. Unfortunately, perhaps, I couldn't find a religious institution in which to express this. Such institutions housed people who seemed scared of intellectual and emotional challenge, and wanted to be part of a flock with reassuringly familiar modalities of thinking, behaving and appearing. The essential kernel of love was

Faith without action is no faith at all.
Dalai Lama

[3] I also read *The Bells of Nagasaki* (Nagai 1984), a book about the atom bombs that were dropped on Japan during World War II, as research for an essay where I had to pretend I was advising President Truman whether or not to drop the bomb. In retrospect, that taught me from an early age a skill I seem to have kept with me – how to argue for ethical outcome by using a utilitarian discourse. My work on why it is good business to *be* a good business and respect the environment and human rights, was within this vein of arguing for an ethical outcome by using a utilitarian discourse. However, the memory of Mother Teresa's words always made me feel slightly ill at ease with this approach.

often suffocated inside a thick institutionalized shell of conservativism. The result was that my life and work had to become a kind of 'worship' and so I became involved in environmental groups. This was also due to my awareness of global social and environmental problems, some of which I describe in Chapter 2, and my belief that traditional politics was no longer the site of creative thought and positive action (it was the Thatcherite era).

Instead I witnessed how dynamic environmental groups had become, but how business interests seemed to guide all aspects of life. Thus for my degree I researched how one environmental group, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF-UK) was working with companies involved in the timber trade, who had committed to source all their supplies from forests endorsed by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). I then went to work for them and began to see how business was responding to groups like WWF on a whole range of social and environmental issues. I reflected on what might be common to these groups, and what their increasing number and influence might come to mean. I started researching, writing and playing with concepts from political theory. This thesis, therefore, addresses questions that arose from my professional life, rather than a set of academic literature, while using insights from such literature.[4]

What I have to say

I have written this thesis to speak to academics, researchers, advocates and members of civil society. This is because I believe the phenomena existing in civil society are of critical importance to the future of humanity and the planet. I write about my investigations and reflections on the power of civil society. For me, civil society is a broad category for grouping together various instances of participation for our common good. Therefore *this thesis is about the power of participation for our common good, or civil power*. It is about how to identify that power and what its affects and effects are. It's also about threats to that power. This is also a report on one person's experience of trying to express civil power – mine. These pages are, in themselves, an attempt to express civil power, as I have written this to help shape discourse in ways that promote our common good, and to identify those processes that undermine it. As one of my PhD examiners pointed out, my thesis is not only about a campaign, it is also a campaign in itself.[5]

This approach to writing is one aspect of an overtly activist methodology, which I describe in detail in Chapter 4. From this methodological standpoint, which is grounded in a philosophical exploration of how we can gain knowledge, research can be justified if it involves action in its conduct and informs action in its output: action with the intention of supporting "our common good", as I describe it in Chapter 2.

---

[4] Subsequently I went freelance, my first job being to help WWF-International formulate the concept for the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). I maintained my freelance practice and activism during my PhD research.
[5] This thesis is not about how to facilitate civil power, so there is still much more work to be done to understand how to catalyse it.

My work could be described as inter-disciplinary, drawing upon insights from people in sociology, political science, international relations, policy studies and management studies, as well as the emerging field of civil society studies. This eclecticism is due to my focus on the 'real world' and my aim of using of academic insight as and when relevant, rather than placing academic insight as the primary aim. In Chapters 4 and 5 I describe some of the negative implications of self-obsessed academic debates, and this means my approach is more anti-disciplinary than inter-disciplinary. This shapes my writing style, which challenges some protocols that applied to most academic disciplines, as a result of natural scientific conceptions of the objective researcher. For example, I use the first person and intersperse personal anecdotes with evidence from my other research and academic readings. This emphasizes that research is subjective and that personal experience is a valuable form of knowledge. Given this I do not want to either objectify or reify academics and therefore use their first names when citing and quoting. One aspect of natural scientific writing I resurrect for this thesis: the use of past tense. In natural science, researchers report on what happened and what was true at the time of an experiment. When I wrote this thesis social scientists used the present tense for their work. I believe this is problematic, as it downplays the importance of time, place and context in determining one's findings. Therefore I only use the present tense when I am making a conclusion I believe is, in some way, timeless.

To have something to say is a question of sleepless nights and worry and endless ratiocination of subject - of endless trying to dig out the essential truth, the essential justice.
F Scott Fitzgerald

My specific focus is on the influence of civil society on the policies and practices of global business, in order to promote our common good. I changed the words of my research question over the years, but in essence it has always been the same: "how was civil society directly influencing business in a global economy for our common good? "[6] In answering it I begin to explore one of the greatest issues of the time: the civilisation of globalisation. To do this I consider the problems associated with global capitalism, the potential of civil society and the nature of our common good (Chapter 2). I map out something of the diversity of relations between business and civil society on social and environmental issues, and develop a theory for conceptualising the exercising of civil power on business, called civil regulation (Chapter 3). I explore this concept with insights from my research of and participation in various civil group - business relations over seven years. I also explore the topic with in-depth case studies of relations between companies in the banana trade (between Costa Rica and the United Kingdom) and their stakeholders in civil society, conducted intermittently over 3 years from 1998 (Chapters 6 to 10).

[6] For example, initially I was interested specifically in sustainable development, and then specifically human rights. I have now decided on talking about the common good, as it captures the essence of the study, and all multi-faceted social and environmental issues that were relevant to people I met.

I propose that some aspects of civil society were having a positive influence over and with business. However, the commercial logic and discourse we lived within shaped managers' responses in ways which appeared to be reducing the potential for change, and worse, *redefining* the possibilities for change in ways that affected the thinking and action of people who *believed* they were working toward our common good, whether in companies or civil groups. Thus I conclude that civil action would need to be redirected at the structures of our commercial society, in order to achieve a greater enabling of our common good.

Another of my conclusions is that the menu of words and ideas at my disposal didn't really allow me to explain what I found going on "out there". I didn't start out with a definition of "civil power" - it arose as a way of communicating what I wanted to say. Neither did I start out as an "action-researcher" but as someone who found traditional research approaches alienated, dull, and somewhat pointless, and who wanted to try something different. Finding an emerging school of thought calling itself action-research, with sufficient parallels to the approach I took was fortuitous and I hope this work will add to it.

The Power to Dream

An idea that is not dangerous is not worthy of being called an idea at all.
Oscar Wilde

If this work gets published then it might surprise a few people who have read my previous work. It shouldn't. In 1997, David Murphy and I said "making money out of money independent of productive activity, the satisfaction of needs and the stewardship of nature has become a debilitating virus, infecting most if not all industrial economies" (Murphy and Bendell 1997b, p.235). However, we focused on the ability of business-civil group partnerships to deliver social and environmental change given that there was little likelihood of fundamental change to our economic system. Meanwhile we hoped that inter-sectoral dialogue would help people in business and civil groups to realise the fundamental constraints imposed by our current form of capitalism:

> *people who were used to throwing bricks at each other are now trying to build together. Ultimately, because of the structural problems with shareholder capitalism, [their partnerships...] may fail to deliver environmentally secure and just societies... [If] the new structures built between business and [civil] groups do crumble, at least we will have learnt more about the architecture of human societies. (ibid, p. 243)*

Unfortunately, over subsequent years I witnessed how these partnerships withstood the pressure of reality and instead it was the goals and aspirations of participants that began to crumble. In 1997, I was hoping for the best, in part because I wanted to be positive and practical and not come across as high-minded. But I think another reason was a desire to seem professional and not too ideological, something that was an issue given that I was 24 at the time. Since then I realised that such a concern for being 'professional' and 'non-ideological' was itself an ideology imposed by a commercial discourse, which was at the root of people's crumbling visions of social progress.

So in this thesis I dare to be 'unprofessional', dare to be unrealistic, dare to dream, because if our society stops us from dreaming, what have we become? The result is an intellectual direct action to awaken academia to a more progressive project that would be dangerous to those who enjoy the fruits of others' subjugation. It is a demonstration that another world of ideas is possible.

CHAPTER TWO. Once Upon a Time we Forgot to Believe in a Story: Liberating Visions of Civil Society.

Rolling onto my back, I lay my head on a rucksack, staring into the night sky. The tarmac still pushes-up through my sleeping bag, but somehow it feels more comfortable this way. I think of the few times I have slept out in the open, in fields after parties, or on beaches while traveling - times when I could revel in the sense of floating through the immensity of space, secured on the edge of a cosmic plan, or comic fluke, called planet Earth. But tonight I can't drift away with thoughts of the infinite expanse of space. Police helicopters hover above, their cones of light traversing the carpark like manic stilts. Dreaming is not permitted. It's the G8 Summit in Genoa, 2001. I stretch my neck. My face feels sticky with the residue of vinegar I was told would help me during tear-gas attacks. Are we being searched-for or spotlighted, I wonder? If they shine their lights on us for long enough perhaps they'll discover what they're looking for? Perhaps we're all here to discover what we're looking for - something different, something possible? I can't sleep and turn to Rik, a guy I met on the streets during the day. 'D'you want to hear my poem', he asks. 'Yeah, why not...'

Possessed by possessions
Lord and Master of all we owe;
Belonging to belongings,
It's a disaster, I know.

Chained to the mundane,
Our reference frame is physical;
Every day the same old same
-Nothing metaphysical.

And if God's not dead
He must be mad
Or blind
Or deaf & dumb
Or bad,
Still smarting over Christ, perhaps:
The way the people have been had.

But in our defence
I'd like to say
We nearly chose the proper path
But lost the plot along the way.
You've got to laugh.

It's not our fault,
It's just the toys
We made made such a lovely noise
And girls
And boys
Are high and dry.

Time to bid
All this
Goodbye.

Some suggested that the backlash against global capitalism, which rose

to prominence through a series of protests at world summits, was about politics and economics (Hardt and Negri 2001; Hertz 2001). Yet people don't take to the streets because of abstract economic or political theories - we act because of our emotions and everyday experiences. Whearas values and belief systems are important in shaping this, much analysis of social action tended to consider the economic or cultural mechanics of social movements.[7] One leader of the 1960s protest movement, Gregory Calvert, suggested that academic study often missed the emotion and spirit of political action:

> *Once a great people's movement has become a thing of the past, it is easy to forget or dismiss the spirit which gave it life and provided the inspiration that moved its participants to acts of faith and courage. Like a corpse seen as a 'dead thing,' a political movement can be dissected by historians, sociologists, or political theorists without ever discovering what made it live and breathe, what gave it hope and daring (Calvert 1991, p. 58).*

Rik Strong's *The Sermon*, which he recited to me as we bedded down in a car park during the demonstrations at the G8 Summit in Genoa, July 2001, captured the emotion that drove many of us to act in what was sometimes called an 'anti-globalisation' or 'anti-capitalism' movement. It was a feeling of something going wrong. The modern Western world didn't relate to how we felt inside. Publicly people didn't seem to care for each other, yet we knew that deep down they must do - surely? There had to be more to us than working, shopping and looking out for Number One.

That was the angst. Then came the anger. Because we felt human selfishness, ignorance, laziness and fear was literally killing people and destroying our planet. The statistics beggared belief. 19,000 children dying every day because their governments were ordered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to cut spending on health and basic services in order to pay back debts they had no control over (Christian Aid 1999). Think of someone you knew who died young. Then think what if someone you know had let them die so you could profit from it.

Then there were the one billion people struggling to survive on less than a dollar a day while their traditional means of providing for themselves through fishing or farming were undermined as time and time again their resources were expropriated by others to feed the global market (Madeley 1999). Their homelands were seen as a source of cheap products for the North, rather than a place

---

[7] There are various theoretical explanations for 'social movements,' which I do not explore in this thesis. Some have argued that social movements stem from adversity and disadvantage (Aberle 1966) or, conversely, from people's ability to access resources to pursue their self-interests (Heberle 1949). The study of 'new' social movements such as the gay, women's and civil rights movements have led to theories which focus on the role of identity and culture in collective action (Castells 1997; Finger 1992), while the study of movements in non-Western contexts have led some to question the focus on individual causal factors and single collective identities of 'movements' (Oommen 1998; Veltmeyer 1997). If we recognise that every fundamental need not sufficiently satisfied is a sign of poverty then there are many different forms of poverty, and we can begin to reconcile the view that cultural identity is the key motivating factor with the position that deprivation is key (Max-Neef 1992; Veltmeyer 1997). Jurgen Habermas's (in Kumar 2000) suggestion that social movements stem from the fallout of modernity, whereby prevailing rationality oppresses people's ability to reflect and express themselves resonates more with my own personal experience in this 'movement'. But like most social science, the study of social movements has been tentative in its investigation of the values and emotions involved. This is because to have a close knowledge of such phenomena you must experience them yourself, which poses a challenge to the objectivist basis of much social science (see Chapter 4).

of diverse knowledge and wisdom. Indigenous cultures were being wiped out, along with their knowledge of flora and fauna and perspectives on the human condition. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reported that in 2001 half the world's languages were in danger of immediate extinction, so oral traditions would be lost forever. (World Monitors 2001a; World Monitors 2001b). This was an extreme example of the increasing 'consumerisation' of cultures around the world, as western television beamed images of a consumer utopia into millions of homes, helping create demand for those consumer goods that symbolised a western lifestyle (Saddar 2000).[8]

Meanwhile increasing numbers of people faced environmental catastrophe because of the effects a century of growing consumerism and industrial production. Freak weather episodes were noticed to be becoming more common and devastating, such as the 1998 hurricane 'Mitch' in Central America, which killed approximately 20,000 people, and the 1999 floods in Venezuela which killed still greater, if unknown, numbers. For the people left to rebuild their lives, climate change wasn't a theory anymore. Nevertheless, our societies continued to increase the rates of deforestation, air and water pollution (Brown 2000), with the government of the largest polluter ripping up an agreement to do something positive because their oil company sponsors worried they might lose profits (Bendell 2001d). Extinctions of flora and fauna continued apace, with biologists estimating that half of all life on earth was at threat from extinction, because of the actions of humankind (Brown 2000). Environmental pollution had already been shown to undermine our health - as I wrote this I had 500 more chemicals circulating in my body than someone living in the 1920s, which increased my risk of allergy, infection, infertility and cancer (Colborn et al. 1997). In the world's industrialised countries, high levels of unemployment, falling real wages and the increasing use of short-term contracts were creating a climate of stress and insecurity for many (e.g. myself, mother, father and many of my friends). The more extreme symptoms of this malaise could be found in growing violent crime rates around the world and increased levels of armed conflict within states (UNDP 1994).

Why didn't people do something sooner? The fact that 40% of all media were controlled by 5 transgovernmental corporations (TGCs)[9] might have had something to do with it (Simms et al.

---

[8] When I was in Nicaragua, next door's 12 year old boy, who couldn't read, didn't go to school and could only ever watch TV on the one set in the village shop, stole my one pair of Nike socks off the washing line and proudly wore them round the village. This illustrated the incredible power of these symbols of fairytale lifestyles. Another family I stayed with while there were quite poor but had had cable TV for years, installed very cheaply just after a new US-subservient government were elected in 1990. When I talked to the father about what he wanted for the future he nodded towards the TV and said "to provide a better life - more consumerables." He had not heard of the problems in the West with regard to pollution, insecurity and affluent diseases such as heart disease and cancer. Why should he? Such things didn't feature on Hollywood films or the adverts that punctuated them.

[9] I use the term TGCs for two reasons. First, to denote the fact that decision-making was often controlled in Northern branches of these companies, with financial benefits accruing in those countries: terms such as 'multinational' or 'global' corporation could give the wrong impression of diffused resources and authority (Gill and Law 1988). Second, as the majority of TGC shareholders were of a certain nationality - US, European and Japanese: the term 'transnational corporation' could hide the national/ethnic disparities of ownership and,

2000). It didn't often pay to talk like this: it wouldn't help sell stuff (Ainger 2001; Chomsky 1992)[10]. Moreover, the political process in most countries was captured, to a greater or lesser degree, by corporate interests. By the early 1990s academics started writing about "the stateless corporation in which people, assets, and transactions move freely across international borders" (Snow et al. 1992, p.8). Governments were subject to a discursive discipline, as all their domestic policies had to respond to the overriding imperative of appearing attractive to TGCs and thus the financial markets (Strange 1996). Those financial markets were shifting $1.5 trillion around the world in currency speculation every day (Simms et al. 2000). Thus the global economy was shaping state monetary and fiscal policy (Andrews and Willett 1997) and imposing a logic on governments to cut corporate taxes and weaken, or not enforce, social or environmental laws (Madeley 1999; Newell and Paterson 1998; WWF 1999, Chapter 6).[11]

The sacred cow of international relations theory - national sovereignty - was now being put to the slaughter by a range of commentators (Agnew 1994; Boyer and Drache 1996; Camilleri and Falk 1992; Cox 1997; Rosenau 1997). Within a few years mainstream non-fiction was speaking of life in a *Captive State* (Monbiot 2001) after *The Silent Takeover* (Hertz 2001) of society by corporations. The façade of democracy was shaken further by George W. Bush's well-Oiled campaign for the US presidency, which was then handed to him by partisan judges. Some months after the election former US labour secretary, Robert Reich (2001), wrote in the *New York Times* that business was "in complete control of the machinery of government. The House, the Senate and the White House are all run by business-friendly Republicans who are deeply indebted to American business for their electoral victories." Questionable state regulation of the oil-company Enron, and firms providing fraudulent accounting and auditing services, compounded this perspective.

---

therefore, wealth. The term TGC implies the freedom of these corporations to pick and chose between different governments, in terms of their productive, financial and political activities. 'Legal' tax evasion illustrates this clearly: Rupert Murdoch's conglomerate News Corporation had around 60 subsidiaries based in various tax havens. Its complex arrangements resulted in only 6 per cent tax being paid, while basic rates in the three main countries where it operated were over 30 per cent. One subsidiary based in Bermuda with apparently no "employees, nor any obvious source of income from outside Mr Murdoch's Companies" made a $1.6 billion net profit over seven years (Oxfam 2000)

[10] Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman (1994) described how the corporate media filtered the news agenda in five ways. First, the business interests of the owner companies influenced reporting. Second, media managers needed to please (and certainly not upset) current and potential advertisers. Third, journalists often relied on press releases from organisations with a commercial interest in influencing the media. Fourth, journalists that 'rocked the boat' would be liable to professional criticism and sometimes litigation. A fifth filter was a blind acceptance of neo-liberal economic ideology, so that many journalists were bemused at, and disinterested in, fundamental critiques of the economic system.

[11] This is not to say that there were no cases of foreign direct investment having a positive impact on social and environmental performance (Vogel 1999). However, although individual production units built by or servicing foreign TGCs may have had higher social and environmental standards than domestic equivalents, those same TGCs still lobbied against legislation that might impose costs to production, and the concern to them moving to another country with less stringent regulations or cheaper labour was commonly heard (see Chapter 6). Critiques of the 'race to the bottom' theory did not consider these aspects properly (see Smarzynska and Wei 2001). This thesis investigates one reason why some TGCs adopted improved practices - the influence of civil society.

No wonder then that the politicians' rhetoric didn't match the reality. They talked of 'free trade' while their liberalising and privatising policies had produced a world where trade was managed by a few TGCs.[12] One-third of world trade occurred between factories and offices of TGCs (ILO 2000, p.8). In consumer durables the top five controlled 70 per cent of the world market. Microsoft had over 90 per cent of the market for computer operating system software (Simms et al. 2000). These were massive centrally-planned economies, soviet-style corporate states that dictated what would be 'needed' and how, by whom and for how much these things would be made. Although our socio-economic lives were governed by these TGCs, most people still thought they lived in a democracy. Perhaps because most of us, even activists, had forgotten what democracy really meant (see Chapter 9).

'This is what democracy looks like' read a banner at the anti-WTO protest in Seattle, November, 1999. Unfortunately most protesters started talking about globalisation more than democracy. Journalists helped confuse everyone by suggesting "globalisation" was a byword for free-market capitalism (Friedman 1999), or corporate takeover (Pilger 2001) and that campaigners were therefore 'anti-globalisation'. Globalisation had merely meant the stretching of social relations across time and space facilitated by technological advance (Giddens 1990). Most academics had referred to it in terms of the reducing cost of communication and transport, for some people and groups, which meant their activities could be coordinated around world (Held et al. 1999). It just so happened that first and foremost those people and groups were capitalists and TGCs, who were actively globalising western consumer culture (which I call consumerisation). The globalisation of resistance, of alternatives, of solidarity, of community, of consciousness and therefore respect and appreciation of diversity, was only getting started (Keck and Sikkink 1998). It's difficult to know what presidents, CEOs and activists alike really meant when they spoke of globalisation as a 'disease', 'desire', or 'destiny' and asserted that it 'can't be stopped,' 'must be stopped,' 'must be tamed' or 'must be promoted.'[13] Yet the ambiguity of the term somehow made it easy to use and added to its popularity, and is why I have used it in the title of this thesis. "The civilization of globalisation." To some this suggests the civilizing of global capitalism, to others it implies there is an emerging civilization that *is* globalisation. By Chapter 11, you may agree with me that it can mean both.

---

[12] The belief in giving a free hand to foreign investors was not always so dominant. In the 1960s and 1970s some 22 less-commercialised countries passed legislation controlling TGC activities, while the nationalisation of foreign corporations reached a peak in the 1970s. Regional agreements such as the Andean Pact imposed controls on incoming investors. In 1974 the United Nations set up the Centre on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC) following a report of the 'Group of Eminent Persons' convened by the UN Economic and Security Council. This led to the development of a 'Draft Code of Conduct on TNCs', which set out a framework for regulation. Much of the work of the UNCTC was to provide training and advice to developing country governments on negotiation strategies vis-à-vis TNCs. The work of the UNCTC was suspended under pressure from certain UN-member governments (Jenkins 2000).

[13] While many academics tied themselves in knots about the term and what it referred to, it is simple enough to point out that the cost of air transport dropped by 84 % between 1930 and 1990, and that of a long-distance telephone call by 99 % and that of computers by 95 percent between 1970 and 1990 (ILO 2000, p. 9). This created a changed environment which people and institutions across the globe were responding to in different ways and at different rates.

The real issues hiding within the ambiguity of the term 'globalisation' were the nature and regulation of global capitalism, the spread of consumerism and, although not often talked about at the time, patriarchy. The environmental degradation and social dislocation we faced was a direct result of the policy paradigm that dominated political discourse in most of the world's nations. There were two pillars upholding this policy paradigm. The first pillar was the idea that increasing the production, consumption and amount of money changing hands in an economy was intrinsically good for society. This was sometimes called as consumerism. The second pillar was the notion that international trade helped in this expansion and that it could best be advanced by de-regulating economic activity. This was sometimes called neo-liberalism. Both personal experience and academic research suggested that these pillars were made of sand and that we needed to reassess what really benefited people - yet business, the media and politicians carried on regardless.[14] As David Korten, noted:

> *The continued quest for economic growth as the organising principle of public policy is accelerating the breakdown of the ecosystem's regenerative capacities and the social fabric that sustains human community; at the same time, it is intensifying the competition for resources between rich and poor - a competition that the poor invariably lose. (1995, p.11).*

The growth-imperative was a natural by-product of a system where money was lent into society with interest attached - hence the economy must expand. This growth imperative was increased by the flotation of companies on stock markets around the world so that directors had to strive to out-perform each other in generating profits, or generating the appearance that they would generate future profits. The fate of TGCs was therefore decided by a handful of investment managers, primarily interested in short-term share price. The collective opinion of these investment managers was the compass from which the courses of TGCs were set, and in turn the course of governments seeking the favour of investors. This form of shareholder capitalism, dubbed 'savage capitalism' by Zapatista rebels, was spiralling out of control, becoming disconnected from the people living in its midst. This disconnection heightened the negative social and environmental consequences of the growth paradigm, as former Reagan-adviser Jeff Gates noted:

> *Lacking a reliable human-based signalling system for identifying investments that have damaging, even transgeneric effects, today's capitalism - indifferent, remote and numbers driven - continues to direct resources into projects that endanger our planetary resources. (1998, p. xxv)*

As mentioned above, the checks and balances on the growth paradigm that might have come from government were withering away. Instead, we had a global monarchy of money, where capital was bestowed with the divine right to govern our lives: "Thy Kingdom Company, Thy Will be Done,

---

[14] British government advisers at the time, such as Anthony Giddens, and ministers such as Hilary Benn argued that evidence suggested liberalisation was good for poverty reduction. At that time, though, their assertions could only have been based on one highly questionable study for the World Bank. David Dollar and Aart Kraay (2000) compared countries considered to be 'globalisers' with those considered to be 'non-globalisers' and argued that trade liberalisation promoted economic growth and that economic growth promoted poverty reduction. However, Rodrik (2000) explained how the authors included and excluded countries and statistics in ways that created the correlation to support their argument. He undertook the same analysis and found that there was no evidence that countries with more open economies experienced higher growth rates and greater poverty reduction.

on Earth as it is in Seven Eleven." You didn't really count as a human being unless you were a human buying; or at least that is how it seemed for many HIV/AIDS sufferers. It took a huge campaign to stop pharmaceutical TGCs from blocking attempts at providing medicinal drugs to people too poor to afford their patented products. Newborn babies contracted HIV from their mothers because of the 'rights' of TGCs, which held 97% of patents worldwide (Bendell 2001d).

Many of the people I met in Europe and the US didn't have much personal experience of the reality behind these statistics, but felt in some way responsible for suffering within a global community. What also drove them was a concern with the way all aspects of economic, political, social and cultural life were becoming sanitised, packaged, and sold. As if we had to consume life, not live it. Why have local live music when you can play a CD? Why make friends when you can watch it on TV? I think Naomi Klein (2000) used that last phrase, and it was the success of her book, *No Logo* that helped legitimise what people were already sensing. We were 'possessed by possessions, belonging to belongings'. But it would be wrong to put the blame at the door of savage capitalism and the branding tactics of TGCs. Instead the problems of society reflected something going awry in ourselves.

My involvement in world summit protests, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), business and academia helped me realise this. I found common characteristics in people and groups working in each of these arenas. Everywhere there was compassion, humility, and inquisitiveness. Yet everywhere there was also pride, fear, manipulation, and ego. Everywhere including in myself. As the old Left woke up to the new wave of anti-capitalism sentiment and became involved with groups such as 'Globalise Resistance' they brought with them their hierarchical we-know-what-you-really-want-and-how-to-win politics. Theirs was a politics of envy not personal liberation. This naturally led to splits and aggressive criticism from those who rejected instant political solutions freeze-dried in the 19th Century. And so egos clashed. When, during a demonstration in Brighton I mentioned to one activist 'leader' that his organisation was critiqued in a *Schnews* pamphlet, he just asked "was I name-checked?" Meanwhile career-conscious band-wagon jumpers leapt like crazy on to talk shows and into best-seller lists and newspaper columns. Perhaps reflecting her own desire, one particularly long jumper asked my friend on the train to Genoa "so where are the leaders?"

I wouldn't want to live in a system that came from the 'overthrow' of another. Or any system where we respected and rewarded people who wanted to be The Leader and decide what was best for us. That would be 'the same old same, Nothing metaphysical'. I'm not an expert on this but I think I am talking about patriarchy, a way of thinking and being that objectifies people and ideas and seeks to control these for self-interest. This was dubbed patriarchy because of the way society celebrated these traits as male qualities (and perhaps because they are genetically 'male' - but that's another discussion). This, however, does not lay the blame with men, as women can exhibit the

same qualities or encourage them in men through their social (and sexual) behavior. I return to these issues below when discussing what might constitute 'our common good.'

Sod the Literature Review

At the time of writing the usual thing to do at the start of a thesis was to provide a 'literature review'. All of those I'd read seemed to serve two purposes. First, they tried to locate the research question within an existing set of literature. Second, they told the reader just how well-read the candidate was and how they really deserved a PhD because they had done tons of work. From my methodology and *action-writing* approach, which I outline in Chapter 4, I reject both of these aims. First, research questions should come from challenges people are facing in the world, not from debates in the literature - which are often a case of semantics anyway. In *civil action-research* theory is servant not master. Second, *civil action-writing* is driven by an assessment of where you think you can make an impact with your writing. It's not just about getting a qualification. (Please read Chapter 4 now if you are unsure about this).

So instead of a standard literature review, my aim for this chapter is threefold. First, I hope to give you a good idea of why it might be helpful for social change to consider the questions I do. Second, I aim to clarify the concepts I use, and explain why it is important to use them in this way (although you will have to wait until Chapter 5 for a discussion of what 'influence' is). Third, I hope to establish what my intended (wider) audience is and why I thought it was important to target that audience.

The opening section to this chapter was therefore meant to serve a number of purposes. I aimed to suggest that there were some problems in the world, which were related to an economic system where some businesses were extremely powerful, and that states were partly captured by these businesses and the paradigm of thought they upheld so that the creative search for solutions to social and environmental problems had to come from somewhere else, and that this 'somewhere else' could possibly be within NGOs, particularly in the way they related to big business. I also wanted to show that the topic of my thesis comes out of my life. I wanted to make this quite personal, and stress the importance of feelings and emotions, as this is something I will return to throughout the thesis.

To help make the following clear, I will quickly say what I hope to achieve in the rest of this chapter. First I'll explain how my own personal experience within an NGO was not unique, and that the questions I am considering here were relevant to many practitioners. Second, I will explain why I decided not to use the term NGO, or non-profit, or some such. Instead I will spend most of the rest of the chapter discussing the term 'civil society', explaining in the process why I considered it important to abandon my previous focus on a business readership and write for the

emergent research community on civil society. I will explain that the concept has always been contested and why I am ready to join the contest. I will suggest that none of the definitions available the time really worked, tending to tie people in knots. I will suggest that despite growing talk of a 'global civil society' work remained state-centric, to the detriment of social change. I will then explain how the concept was under threat on one side by the large universities who were hampered by their number-crunching methodologies and on the other side by people who were tempted with fuzzy feel-good ideas about corporations being part of civil society. Instead I will offer a definition which arose out of my research, rather than pre-figuring it (which meant I had to go back and completely re-analyse my work and re-write my thesis!) I conclude the chapter with the suggestion that various traditions of thought, including spiritual, rational and ecological, relate to the definition of civil society that I put forward.

The Rise and Fall of the Non-This's and Non-That's

Although some of my friends and family thought so at the time, it was not that unusual that I worked for an NGO. According to a research project by John Hopkins University the 'nonprofit sector' in the 22 countries they examined employed 19 million full-time paid workers, together turning over $1.1 trillion annually (Salamon et al. 1999). Neither was it unusual I was working on international issues, as the same university found that in just France, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Spain, and UK over 100,000 full-time paid employees and 1.2 million full-time volunteers were working for international NGOs (Salamon et al. 1999). The UN Human Development Report (UNDP 1999) described a similar situation, counting around 30,000 NGOs, with 1999 total revenues in the US estimated at $556 billion, in Japan $264 billion, in the UK $78 billion, and the combined budgets of NGOs in less-industrialised countries amounting to $1.2 billion. The nineties witnessed a booming number of NGOs, with around one quarter of the 13,000 international NGOs in existence in 2000 having been created after 1990 (Anheier et al. 2001). These figures indicate something of the extent to which people were working together for non-profit, non-governmental activities, although they hide the various 'sporific' networks of people who were coming together for various reasons at various times, facilitated by new communications technologies. Nevertheless, they suggest a 'global associational revolution' (Salamon et al. 1999) was underway, creating a 'globalisation from below' (Giddens 1999, p.8).

What was unusual in 1995 was that I was being paid by a charity to help companies improve their environmental performance. Looking around me at the time I didn't see many others doing that kind of work, but as I started researching for my first book *In the Company of Partners* (Murphy and Bendell 1997b), I discovered that I might be part of what we called a 'third wave of environmentalism' where people began to work directly with, or against, business to promote change. That same year corporate responsibility consultant Simon Zadek (1997, p.3) wrote of "a veritable explosion in new and renewed forms of engagement between business and civil institutions" while environmental writer Paul Hawken estimated that NGOs attending just one

conference on sustainable enterprise in Washington D.C. were together working with 2000 companies, turning over about $1.7 trillion annually (Zadek 1997). The reasons NGOs were turning to business seemed obvious to those involved. Most were frustrated with the lack of action at governmental and intergovernmental levels, and thought they might get somewhere by threatening the reputations of corporations who would be construed as complicit in environmental or social degradation if they didn't collaborate for change (Bendell 2000c; Esty and Gentry 1997; Heap 2000; Murphy and Bendell 1997b). As the British NGO New Economics Foundation remarked, "civil action [on consumption] emerges because of a failure of public policy and action to monitor, guide and where appropriate, direct individuals and businesses towards socially and environmentally responsible behaviour" (Zadek et al. 1998, p.37).

A key reason why I wrote my first book, with David Murphy, was because there was no published literature at that time on how NGOs could engage with business to shape their policies and performance on social and environmental issues. Instead relations were understood to be entirely antagonistic (Rowell 2001), or philanthropic (Forrester 1990). Therefore NGO staff were, in the words of Oxfam's George Tarvit (1999, per com) "learning how to engage with business literally by doing it." In the next two years corporate voluntary action on sustainable development issues took off and I edited *Terms for Endearment* (Bendell 2000c) with the aim of describing the importance of NGOs remaining involved in corporate change processes (see the following chapter).

In writing those two books I used the term 'NGO', mainly because of its ubiquitous usage at the time, and the fact that I had practitioners in mind and did not want to lose them, or myself, in social or political theory. Yet I felt the term 'NGO' was a null-definition, as was 'Nonprofit', a popular term in North America. These terms do not describe what something *is* but what it *is not*. Because of this the terms NGO and Nonprofits were like conceptual hold-alls: you could just about stuff any organisation into them if you tried hard enough. In 1998, I jokingly wrote to the business-NGO relations discussion group asking whether we could imagine political leaders accepting a world where governmental bodies were known as Nonprofits, or perhaps Non-Business Organisations - NBOs. We have this term called 'government': and although it means a lot of different things to different people we still use it. The UN, G8, OECD were founded on the common identity that a positive definition provided. If 'governments' were just 'NBOs' alongside Amnesty International, the Klu Klux Klan and the local walking club, how would they know whom to talk to? And once they decided, how would they justify it? My point was that the things being named 'NGOs' and 'Nonprofits' were important enough to society that we should use a positive definition that reflected what they might be *for*.[15]

[15] Some commentators did talk about 'voluntary associations' and the 'voluntary sector.' While this was a positive definition it was inaccurate for a number of reasons. First, many, perhaps most, people working for voluntary associations were not volunteering, but were paid employees. If the voluntary aspects is meant to refer to the associating, then business can be see as a voluntary association: unless we are slaves we choose to work for our

I wondered, "if these entities involved in 'globalisation from below' could be described as non-governmental and non-profit what was common to both governments and for-profit businesses that was worth being distinguished from?" I wondered whether the answer might lie with the issue of power. I saw that nation states appropriated power from individuals and communities - the legitimate use of force or taxes being examples - in return for providing certain benefits. For-profit business appropriated power from individuals and communities - in the form of profit - in return for providing certain benefits. So perhaps the common characteristic could be the systematic appropriation of power? Thus I thought that the defining characteristic of NGOs and Nonprofits could be that rather than appropriating power from people they might actually empower them. I pondered on whether this might be a common bond between people working in organisations like mine, and how giving voice to that common bond might liberate further social change. I began to toy with questions of power, democracy, self-interest and selflessness. I was tired of being a non-this or anti-that and began reading about a concept that kept popping up and seemed to have a positive connotation - "civil society".

Let's Have a Nice and Civil Society Please!

A consequence of that process is that this thesis is about civil society and from now on I write about the activities of *civil groups* and *civil actors*, not NGOs or Nonprofits. Now when I say 'civil society' I don't mean a nice polite society where people say please and thank you. While some of you might laugh at that, there was an implicit assumption amongst some civil society researchers (and practitioners) that it was constituted by friendly, law-abiding people. I discovered this when I presented a paper at a conference of the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR) in Geneva, where I emphasised the importance of protest and direct action in creating the impetus for business to collaborate with activists and adopt social and environmental policies. Some of the people I met considered protest and activism to be "pathologies", an indicator of a sick society, rather than of a healthy 'civil' one. There seemed to be a strong 'charity mentality' amongst delegates, by which I mean a focus on, and lauding of, helping the less fortunate rather than a critical analysis of the socio-economic relations that cast people in the roles of helper and helped. One reason was that there had been a sharp distinction between the literature on social movements and non-profit organisations (Kumar 2000). People studying patterns of philanthropic giving in the US, for instance, would not necessarily relate to discussions of peasant land-rights movements in Latin America. Our understanding of civil society was, thus, hampered by our academic silos, so people studying nonprofit hospitals and revolutionary movements, for example, didn't talk to each other. Academic disciplines did just that - disciplined. Thus researchers remained in self-referential and self-obsessed silos. If I'd stayed in a geography department I would have spent half

---

employer. Moreover, in a world where emigration is commonplace, the Nation State can also be seen as a voluntary association: if you emigrate you are voluntarily associating with another state.

of this thesis justifying the notion that studying civil action was of geographical interest. I would have had to write some tortuous chapter about 'spaces and places' of civil action (for example see Thorne 1997). Sod the disciplines. We needed more academic indiscipline, more disruptive students at the back of the class asking "what's the point, Sir?"

But of course 'Sir' can discipline you, by not printing what you have to say. What you're reading came out in 2002, four years after I wrote the same ideas and had them rejected from the journal *Voluntas,* because of my methodological approach. The reviewers criticised my use of personal experience as opposed to 'objective data', my writing in the first person and with an activist tone, and my intent on offering the reader a learning experience, as I began with one definition of civil society and then showed how it didn't work and had to change. Yet all these were fundamental to my 'civil action-research' approach, which I have the chance to explain further in Chapter 4. Given the apparent stuffiness of studies into the NGO, nonprofit or voluntary sectors I focused my writing efforts on a business audience, where people were developing new fields of research around sustainable business, corporate social responsibility and corporate citizenship.[16] Yet I remained interested in civil society, and knew I would rejoin the debate with my PhD thesis. My reason being that "civil society is a concept located strategically at the cross-section of important strands of intellectual developments in the social sciences" (LSE 2001, p.4). Moreover, I believed the concept could be useful in helping us understand ourselves - how and why we work for social change. Definitions enable or disable thought and action, as they shape discourse and so the popularisation of certain terms, such as civil society, is important (Chapter 5). The meaning of (global) civil society was being contested by different academics and practitioners, and I feared its usefulness would be lost, or even worse, that popular definitions might have a regressive influence, as I explain below. First, though, it is important to locate my discussions within the context of various traditions of thought on civil society.

A Bill and Ted Tour of Civil Society

If this were a traditional thesis you would now become bored rigid as I ploughed through the last few millennia of ideas that relate to civil society in some way. I've read a few PhD theses with such chapters and don't want to put you through that. Instead, a quick *Bill and Ted*[17] history tour of civil society will serve to illustrate how it is a term with a long history and different theoreticians can point to different traditions of thought to seemingly add weight to their arguments - whatever they are. Travel back to Athenian times and we see civil society was regarded as the political society of active citizens who considered each other equal and discussed what would be best to do

[16] For example, I edited an issue of *Greener Management International* (Bendell 1998b), and the business-focused book *Terms for Endearment* (Bendell 2000c), wrote a chapter *Greener Purchasing* (Murphy and Bendell 1998) and contributed to business magazines such as *Green Futures* (Bendell and Murphy 1997a), *Tomorrow Magazine* (Bendell, 2000b), and *Business and Society Review* (Bendell and Murphy 1997b) and then wrote a column in the newly launched *Journal of Corporate Citizenship.*

for their common good (Arendt 1958, p.32). The fact they had women and slaves to do their shit for them while they pontificated about this was another matter. Whizz forward to the mid-nineteenth century and we have a bearded guy called Karl Marx reading some books by Hegel and perceiving civil society to be made up of all forms of social and political dialogue outside the state, but which would inevitably be shaped by the interests of capitalists (Marx and Engels 1975). Zoom across the Atlantic and we find a guy called Alexis de Tocqueville having a great holiday and writing home with rave reviews of the civil society that was the way Americans came together and got things done, or lobbied the state for their interests when needed. He saw this as a great means of counterbalancing governmental power (Tocqueville 1835/1945).

Let's jump back into the time machine and call up 1920s Italy. We find a 35 year old Antonio Gramsci, a former member of the Italian parliament and general secretary of the underground Italian Communist Party now staring at ten years in gaol, courtesy of Benito Mussolini. Luckily he has pen and paper and is writing his *Prison Notebooks* (Gramsci 1971) where he defines civil society as the realm of social life and political action outside the sectors of business and government. He's not particularly happy being locked up and conceives of civil society like the trenches in an ideological war between capitalists and socialists. I think I like this idea of three sectors, but let us jump forward and into a political system Gramsci might have liked - communist Eastern Europe. Here we find a Czech playright called Vaclav Havel trying to creatively express himself beyond the economic, political and cultural domination of the state. Civil society to him and his fellow dissidents represents all aspects of life lived autonomously from the state (Havel 1985), perhaps assuming it "good to escape from the frying pan of state domination to the fire of the authoritarianism of market forces and corporate capital" (Hyman 2001, p. 49). Nevermind. One more small jump forward into the nineties and the offices of the British government where the civil servants are becoming frustrated with the way their aid is being spent by recipient governments, some of them being dictatorships. "Ah ha", they say, "let's give it straight to the civil groups, this will help build 'civil society' and make the countries more democratic!" (Clayton 1996).

"Sounds like that de Tourqeville dude, Ted, but a bit too top-down."
"Yeah civil society's more bottom-up, Bill, kinda irrepressable, can't keep it down man"
"Cool, Ted, but it still seems like people wanting to get their own way, not like the kind of helping-out-for-the-greater-good stuff people are on about now."

Good point guys. It does seem this way. We skipped someone in 1960s Germany, a guy called Jurgen Habermas who thought of civil society as a "critical public sphere" where "private people come together as a public" to discuss what is right and wrong to do, ideally free from self-interest, although he saw money and power often getting in the way (Habermas 1962, p. 27). Somewhat reflecting the emphasis on reason and rationality abounding in social science at that time, he

[17] The name of a cult US film about two high school kids who travel back through time to protect their futures

believed that people would come to understand and pursue a common purpose by way of *reasoned argument*. There might be other reasons for working toward the greater good, which I'll return to below. What this history tour illustrates is how dependent our intellectual traditions are on Western culture. By trying to find historical antecedents for civil society thinking we restrict ourselves to Latin and Greek based languages. Muslim and Hindu cultures produced a history of writings on social and political issues, and the oral traditions of indigenous cultures might also have had something to contribute to our thinking on civil society, but they did not fit so easily within the western academic framework. History can open our eyes wide shut.

And at the Time of Writing

When I came to write this thesis there was still a wide range of thought on what constituted civil society. Some, including many practitioners, saw civil society as an aspirational state of being for all society, and therefore talked of society becoming a more civil society (Janoski 1998). Others saw civil society as an aspect of society, made up of associations of people below the level of government and above the family unit (Keane 1988; Keane 2001; Parekh 1993). Some regarded it likewise but excluded for-profit activities as a separate form of associating (Anheier et al. 2001; Cohen and Arato 1992; Salamon et al. 1999). Some of these people regarded civil society less as a sector and more as a field of dialogue and action somewhat free of vested interests (Cohen 1995). Others believed all these definitions had some implicit value-judgements and argued that civil society could be regarded as individual or collective action for the common good (Knight and Hartnell 2000). Therefore there was some tentative talk of whether companies might be part of civil society, not because civil society was all forms of association above the family and below the state, but because of claims about corporations acting for the common good (Zadek 2001).

In 2000, The London School of Economics launched a 'Centre for Civil Society' and ventured the following definition as a way of trying to tie together the various approaches and emphases:

> *Civil society refers to the set of institutions, organisations and behaviours situated between the state, the business world, and the family. Specifically, this includes voluntary and non-profit organisations of many different kinds, philanthropic institutions, social and political movements, other forms of social participation and engagement and the values and cultural patterns associated with them (LSE 2001, p. 4)*

The same year an international organisation bringing together civil groups from around the world, the Citizens' Alliance for World Participation (CIVICUS), defined civil society on their website as:

> *The sphere of institutions, organisations, networks and individuals (and their values) located between the confines of the family, the state and the market, in which people associate voluntarily to advance common interests.*

Two things are worth noting, relating to state-centrism and values. Not unusually, the definitions were somewhat state-centric in that they spoke of civil society's position in relation to the state (Dettke 1995). Although commentators on civil society were increasingly aware of the problems

---

as the founders of a new civilisation, inspired by their (terrible rock) music.

of 'methodological nationalism' the state still shaped their conceptualisation of civil society and formed the basis of their empirical work, even when working 'beyond' the state. This was illustrated by Helmut Anheier's (2001) plan to measure contributions to *global* civil society on a state-by-state basis. Therefore these were still very much null-definitions, focusing on what civil society was *not*. Again I would ask - what is it about the *location* between the physical things of state and market that defines ideas and values? Yet the definitions reflected how values were downplayed as analytical issues, being tacked on the end of LSE's definition, and in brackets in Civicus's definition. The first *Global Civil Society Yearbook* indicated that ideas and values were moving to the fore of researchers' minds, illustrated by their definition of global civil society as "the sphere of ideas, values..." mentioned first, then "institutions, organisations, networks, and individuals..." mentioned second (Anheier et al. 2001). Indeed, awakened by the media-coverage given to protests such as the one mentioned in the opening of this chapter, they went on to suggest that "one way of defining or understanding global civil society is as a debate about the future direction of globalisation and perhaps humankind itself" (p. 10). This strikes me as a question of opinions, and therefore, ideas and values. Despite this, they argued "that the normative content (of civil society) is too contested to be able to form the basis for an operationalisation of the concept" (p. 10). I believe this contestation made it more important to study, and it was the researchers' paradigm of research that restricted their "operationalisation of the concept." As Barry Knight and Caroline Hartnell noted in the magazine *Alliance*, "it is easier to count and classify organisations than it is to wrestle with the messy and turbulent world of purposes and values" (2000, p. 18). In the following section I will explain how the research community was literally emptying the concept of meaning because of their positivist-empiricist focus. By this, I mean their focus on reducing everything into numbers as a means of 'understanding' phenomena in society (see Chapter 4 for a deconstruction of positivist-empiricist methodology). By doing this I hoped to help save the usefulness of the concept (a civil action in itself - see Chapter 4).

When Values Don't *Add-Up*

In the nineties and early naughties the study of civil society became a growth industry. There were western research centres like John Hopkins University (JHU) undertaking *big* projects backed by *big* money from major charitable foundations. They sought to map civil society around the world by devising a research template for academics in other parts of the world to use in order to produce numbers, which could then be fed into the global picture. This process included the turning the diversity of subjective views encountered into numbers 1, 2 or 3, which is quite ridiculous from a methodological standpoint (Salamon et al. 2000, p.15, see Chapter 4). As many of the national researchers were from less well-off countries, the JHU contracts were welcome income. The by-product of their dependent economic position was often a dependent intellectual position, where their freedom to research civil society on their own terms was constrained. This is what I'd call intellectual imperialism - the enforcement of a particular world-view in order to extract data from the periphery to feed the development of the core.

The top number-compilers were often given the podium at events like ISTR conferences to tell the assembled minions what civil society *actually* was, priding themselves on notions of scientific objectivity. They rejected people's stories and views as "anecdotes whose generalizability is often difficult to assess" (Salamon et al. 2000, p. 1). Why generalizability was important to social progress was not really questioned, since it served their purposes of producing data to satisfy funders and publish books.[18] This was assembly-line research, with hundreds of countries out there to be given the Model-T treatment, so long as the big research funds kept coming from the foundations. My argument in Chapter 4 is that social phenomena are so complex that reductionism doesn't serve us well and instead a depth of knowing can come from participating fully in the phenomena you purport to have 'knowledge' of. With this in mind, the more hierarchical the research-process the less likely the researchers would really know what they were writing about.

While this was somewhat to be expected of hierarchical institutions such as Universities, what was worrying was how other groups with a more specific normative agenda had begun to succumb to this way of thinking. For example, CIVICUS was created as a visionary organisation charged with increasing citizen participation globally, but it faced the challenge of institution building and cutting a role for itself amongst the growing industry of mapping civil society. The CIVICUS Index on Civil Society was, in part, a result of these considerations. Country by country they considered what they termed the 'space, structure, values and impact' of civil society to give a measure of its 'health'.[19] With the criterion of 'space' for civil society, immediately problems appear. In giving a score for political and civil liberties they used Freedom House's scores on a scale of 1 (free) to 7 (not free). The home country of this organisation did not respect the right to life (imposing the death penalty), or the right to free healthcare, or the right for travelling to wherever you wish (eg. not Cuba) or to have your votes counted or to have a non-political judiciary or to have a government that would work with others to save the planet (i.e. the Kyoto protocol). Yet that country, the United States, scored top marks in Freedom House's ratings. Many countries where all those rights were upheld obtained lower scores. This was Freedom Housed within a narrow western paradigm of theoretical freedoms to pursue narrow self-interests. These

---

[18] As academics they were not unusual in looking at research in this self-interested way, such were the incentive structures for academics at the time, which required publications and rewarded institution building efforts. The lack of self-awareness on this matter was illustrated in the first *Global Civil Society Yearbook* when the editors explained how they were confident it would "become a central reference point for empirical and theoretical work on global civil society" with a secondary "hope" that this information would "be of use to policy-makers and practitioners" (Anheier et al. 2001, p. 19). The idea that their work would be helpful to the anti-capitalist "practitioners" whose activities had been a focus for their book was unlikely and I don't think they seriously thought it would be helpful to them (unless perhaps, they thought it heavy enough to chuck through the window of a McDonald's restaurant). My question, then, is why bother? If your research isn't a civil action in itself how can you justify it in ways which aren't based on one's alienation from self and society?

[19] Structure: in terms of size, composition and sources of support of the unit under consideration. How large is civil society in economic, social and organisational terms? Space: in terms of the regulatory environment in which the unit operates. What legal and political "space" does it occupy within the regulatory "environment" it operates? Value-related: in terms of norms and cultural elements of the unit. What values, norms and cultural expectations does civil society represent and advocate? Impact-related: or functional in terms of the specific, contextual contributions of civil society or the specific unit of analysis in question. What is the contribution of civil society to specific social, economic and political problems? (Source: www.lse.ac.uk)

were the rights of a complacent self-interested citizenry. Western values defined for academics the indicators of civil society, so countries had to exhibit these in order to have one (Hann and Dunn 1996). Meanwhile broader notions of rights, such as the right not to be complicit in oppressing others, were not conceived by Freedom House. To illustrate, in the UK, which was given a high score, I was only free so long as I accepted that my money would be used to bomb Iraq, or help guarantee British companies' arms exports to oppressive regimes - if I physically objected by not paying taxes then I would be in prison (this also highlights the problems of a state-centred approach to considering rights.)

In their attempts to document the health of civil society in upholding values, the positivist assumptions of the Index project really began to look untenable. To begin with, certain values were defined by the western research managers as relevant to civil society, with country-based researchers then asked to grade the performance of civil society in upholding them. The belief that the values relevant to civil society could be determined in the West was justifiably challenged by collaborating researchers, who were then given some liberty to explore what other values might be relevant (Heinrich and Naidoo 2001). A number of other concessions were made to the views of Southern researchers, yet the belief that values could be reduced to numerics remained.

To compile a grade for the 'impact' of the sector researchers asked business and government officials what they thought of civil society performance. What if a greater impact of civil society would engender a greater antagonism towards it from government and business? The Mexican government and business communities weren't leaping for joy with the impact of the landless peasant movement in the Chiapas. The fact that the Zapatista's struggle for autonomy had inspired people around the world did not feature in the index of Mexican civil society - it just wouldn't compute (see Verduzco and Reveles 2001). The authors of that report on Mexican civil society did express an apparent frustration with the limitations of what they were instructed to do to conform to the Index project (ibid, p. 16):

> *The survey does not consider activities of CSOs that are important in the Mexican context, even though they do not have any legal personality, do not provide services, and do not have among their objectives the influencing of government agencies or the legislative chambers.*

Supporters of the project said that the comparability of the data from different countries would help advocates of civil society in countries with a low score. Yet because of the way the data was being compiled it looked likely that it would produce a correlation between countries with a higher Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and a healthier civil society. Not only was it a bent ruler, it might then be used as a faulty compass.[20] These developments worried some. Barry Knight and Caroline Hartnell (2000) wrote:

[20] The project managers recognised some of these critiques and reported to know of other approaches, but their responses to these left the project largely intact in its original form. For example, they recognised the importance of action-research, but understood this in terms of *applied* research i.e. research that might produce useful data,

> *What has gone wrong in our understanding of civil society is that the recent literature has separated it from the idea of progress in transition. Instead, it has tended to conceive civil society as a coefficient of organisations and sectors... [this] conventional wisdom of civil society is limited and distorted because it relies on top-down research methods which locates organisations as the primary unit of analysis, largely because organisations are, or at least registered organisations, are easy to see. (p. 17-18)*

And count. They reported on participatory research with 10,000 citizens in 47 countries which showed that many people defined civil society as individual and collective action towards the common public good (Knight et al. 2002). Drawing on this study, Barry and Caroline argued:

> *The unit of analysis of civil society should be 'individual and collective action'. It is... not just the province of organisational behaviour conforming to some standard of not being government or business. Far from it, such individual and collective action may include actions by government officials and business entrepreneurs as citizens, acting for the common public good in their communities and neighbourhoods. (2000, p.18).*

However, their definition was not accepted by the mainstream research community, embodied in organisations like LSE and JHU. Helmut Anheier, Marlies Glasius and Mary Kaldor (2001) argued that using a normative definition of civil society meant that "defending civil society as a 'good thing' threatens to become tautological: it is a good thing because it espouses the values we hold. Anyone who fails to hold these values is not part of civil society. And whose values are these?" They asked this questioned rhetorically, yet I believe this was the question that could form the basis of research (and action) on civil society. What were the values at play? And what conception of civil society could support people in developing and expressing their values? What academics seemed to have forgotten was that the way we invest meaning into words about abstract concepts is a creative and artistic process, not a scientific rational exercise. Language *is* art (and not just in the way it might be used in poetry and prose, but in the construction of meaning itself). We create, whether we try to or not. Our definitions are normative whether we want them to be or not. Hence I venture the following definition of civil society, which arose out of my readings as well as research and reflection on my life's experiences.

Our Common Good

> *Instead of arguing about what is and what is not included in civil society, we should be arguing what is and is not included in the notion of the common good. (Knight and Hartnell 2000, p.18).*

I define civil society as the sphere of participation for our common good. This immediately raises the question of what constitutes our common good. In the second half of this chapter I will suggest that our common good can be understood as our collective pursuit of individual preferences. Although I introduce this definition here, it did not pre-figure my research but evolved as I read,

---

rather than research that involved civil action in its conduct. In addition, despite the earlier arguments of Civicus members (Naidoo and Tandon 1999) they decided upon a definition of civil society that included any form of associational activity, whatever its purpose. In the same way that economic research had succumbed to measuring the noise of an economy as Gross National Product (GNP), rather than the quality of its outputs,

researched and lived and as I tried to find ways of communicating what I was finding and experiencing. My decision to use this definition came about partly because what I saw being done in the name of aspirational concepts - such as sustainable development, corporate social responsibility and civil society - didn't *feel* quite right. Although in this chapter I present a somewhat logical argument of why this definition is appropriate, I must be clear that it stemmed from feelings as much as reason (I return to this below). Moreover, the definition is a *strategic choice*, a civil action in itself, as I believed it would support the liberation of research and practice in this area. Hence this chapter is as concluding as it is introductory.

What is good? First, let us start with what it is not. It is not development, in the western economic sense. Neither is it progress, in the technological or scientific sense. Throughout the 20th Century technological progress and economic development seeped deep into our psyche as things that affirmed our existence and which, therefore, must be 'good'. This was not surprising, as humans are toolmakers. It is what we do, what makes us different from the rest of life on Earth. If we didn't make things where would we be? Hungry, cold, threatened. But the things we make do not define what is good about our lives. I think people knew what it was they wanted, which was to be happy; and people knew that it was good to make people happy. Where we got lost was thinking that the things brought by technological progress would make us happy. We confused our tools with our ends. People equated wealth not with happiness but with having lots of stuff. "The toys we made, made such a lovely noise", as Rik recited.

Once, when I was Nicaragua, I looked up from my books and saw the children playing next door, barefoot in the sand, and I realised that wealth is mental as well as material; not wanting, the same as already having. Some needs exist, others are created, still other needs are chosen. Similarly, true affluence is not having to worry. So while those children were playing happily living on around a dollar a day, it was their mother who worried about the price of food and electricity increasing and wished she could give her children what she had when she was younger and times were better. Her country's 'development' was a history of others-knowing-better. And this is the point. Why does anyone think we know how other people should live? If we do, what does this say about our values? That we know what makes other people happy?

Happiness is subjective. People working within evolutionary psychology, psychotherapy, and various other intellectual as well as religious traditions have suggested different things make us happy or unhappy. I'm not an expert in happiness, but from talking and thinking, it seems that everybody seeks happiness within a framework of meaning, security and experience (I'll call these 'living needs'). Everyone I know needs some sort of *meaning* to their lives. Without it they can only be happy in a transient way - and hence many are not. Most people seem to need some

---

civil society research was succumbing to measuring the noise of associational activity rather than the different purposes of such. The Index measured 'Gross Associational Product' (Heinrich and Naidoo 2001).

security, by which I mean material and financial but also reassurance that you're OK, doing the right thing, on the right track. And thirdly, people need *experiences* - novel and different experiences and feelings. The other things people seek seem to relate to at least one of these living needs. Take love, for example. We may seek romantic love to give our lives meaning, to give us a sense of peace and security, or for the experience of being in love. If we were to sketch meaning, security and experience as corners of a triangle, I'd suggest that we in the West had drifted rather towards the security and experience corners, and therefore away from meaning, thereby creating the kind of angst in Rik's poem, especially for those with a growing self-awareness of their place amongst a suffering planet and people.[21]

Happiness can only come from people finding their own balance of living needs. This means self-determination is crucial for people to find this balance. "Our common good" is therefore our collective ability to pursue our individual interests or preferences, to find happiness in our own ways.[22] This does not mean we wash our hands of the destinies of others, in fact it means the exact opposite, in three distinct ways. First, the collective pursuit of individual preferences means that our preferences shouldn't impair others' preferences. My freedom to do shouldn't impair others freedom to do (as the pursuit of individual preferences is a universal principle). Second, an individual's opportunity to pursue a preference nearly always depends on the support of others - my theoretical freedom to do something doesn't mean an ability to do something. Therefore the collective pursuit implies more than the theoretical right to do something, but the responsibility of the collective to facilitate that.[23] Third, people's individual preferences are often to support the collective pursuit! This desire is fundamental to who we are as human beings, whether this is because of a shared consciousness, a connection with God, or just our genetic programming. Thus the more self-aware we become, so the more aware of our interconnectedness with others and the

---

[21] I began some reading around these topics and realise that there are some similarities between my ideas on living needs and Sigmund Freud's notions of Id, Ego and Super Ego. The fragile understandings I present here have come from life, not literature, so I did not want to insert any references here, since it would give the impression that this is a logically developed framework. It is not - it is just how I feel.

[22] During the course of my reading I stumbled across some writing on utilitarianism, which has some parallels with these ideas. First propounded by Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and John Stuart Mill (Priest 1957), utilitarianism has been used as the basis for modern economics. I disagree with them that we can understand human behaviour as the pursuit of desires and the avoidance of pain. We are more complicated than that. Pure utilitarianism also suggests that our common good would best be served by actions that would "create the greatest total amount of happiness or utility" (Isbister 2001, p. 21). However, I am not saying that we should maximise the total aggregate pursuit of preferences, but we should maximise the conditions for every individual to pursue their preferences. I don't believe we can easily measure aggregate happiness, and I don't believe we should seek to, as this undermines the universality of the collective pursuit i.e. that everyone should be able to pursue their preferences. This is also key because we find that people's individual preference is often to support the collective pursuit, as I will now explain.

[23] As political philosopher Philippe Van Parijs (1995, p. 4) noted "real freedom is not only a matter of having the right to do what one might want to do, but also a matter of having the means for doing it." Amartya Sen popularised this nuanced understanding of rights, by distinguishing between negative rights and freedoms, which refer to situations where rules might have stopped you from doing something and positive rights or freedoms which refer to whether you can realise something that you would like to do. Restricting negative freedom necessarily restricts positive freedom, but the reverse does not hold. Amartya uses this distinction to suggest that in order for people to realise their capabilities, societies need not only to refrain from restricting negative freedom (which would be the liberal view), but also to provide the support that is necessary for people to realise their capabilities (Sen 1999).

more our own interest becomes to serve the common interest. Our own happiness becomes codetermined by other's happiness. How could anyone go to heaven knowing other people went to hell? I believe most if not all of us have this potential within us. As a guy I met on a Brighton street said to me, while I was handing out flyers for our Genoa G8 coach, "we just need to help people to express what they already know, help legitimate how they already feel inside."

From this perspective the whole western discourse around charity, on the one hand, and rights, on the other, gets thrown into confusion. For example, international aid and development work is no longer a question of helping others out a bit in hot-poor countries. It's about joining them in self-liberation, because those complicit in oppression are themselves oppressed, and those who oppress are themselves oppressed of spirit and self-awareness. As poet Lila Watson, an Australian Aboriginal once wrote:

If you have come
To help me
Then
You are wasting your time
But
If you have come
Because
Your Liberation
Is bound up with mine
Then
Come
And let us
Work together

A similar spirit is found amongst some of the indigenous peoples of the tropics. Members of the U'Wa tribe in Colombia, whose lands and lifestyle were threatened for years by Occidental Corporation, told a friend of mine: "We don't want help, we just want people to realise who they are. We don't want to be a dying relic of what people truly are". Do we have the right to articulate and express who we truly are, being in touch with the planet and all it's people, or just the right to be selfish?

The meek shall inherit the earth,
but not the mineral rights.
Paul Getty

Therefore we see that civil society, or participation for our common good, or participation for the collective pursuit of individual preferences, to drill down the definition, doesn't mean acting to help people pursue narrow selfish interest. On the one hand it's about liberating ourselves from our own oppressor-oppressed situation which involves freeing people to pursue their individual preferences. But on the other hand, it is about helping everyone discover their desire to participate for our common good. Indeed, one of the biggest buzzes I've got is from stimulating or re-invigorating that desire in people to work for our common good. In this sense civil action is participation for the collective pursuit of participation for the collective pursuit and so on and on. There is a circularity

of thought here that the West had not been particularly fond of (circular reasoning carried a bad connotation in social science).

Given the problems with over-fishing, I'll twist the following metaphor to try and catch what I mean:

> Give a man a fish - and he'll eat for a day
> Teach a man to fish - and he'll eat like there's no tomorrow
> Inspire a man to teach others how to fish carefully - and we'll eat for generations.[24]

At the same time the over-fishing crisis and problems with indigenous land rights remind us of the other sides to human nature. Hence our desire to act for our common good is made more urgent by the fact that everyone's self-determination is continually threatened by other people and organisations seeking to control them for narrow self-interest.

In concluding this section I should say something about the extent of the "collective" in the collective pursuit or the "common" in the common good. I assume these to imply all humanity, perhaps all life on planet Earth. Anything less would contradict the universality of the principle. Unfortunately people do not always recognise this, and hence values of love, solidarity, community and so on can energise horrible activities, such as national and religious wars.[25] Therefore I assume our common good to imply the global collective pursuit of individual preferences. Perhaps this suggests we need a new global consciousness, but then again, within the great traditions of humanity we already find guidance toward the same end - Jesus's teaching to "love your enemy" being an obvious example.

Parallel Thinking

I wrote the above section without references as I believed that the issues I was talking about must come from the heart, and stem from everyday experience.[26] But none of the ideas were new, with parallels in religious, rational and eco-scientific thought. I'll briefly describe each in turn.

One of the things I remember from visiting London's Millenium Dome in 2000, was the spiritual zone - this being the zone that almost didn't happen for lack of sponsorship. As a consequence it had little in it, but written along a simple white curving partition were quotes from dozens of religions. These quotes from the texts of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism,

---

[24] I have used the gender specific "man" and not "someone" purely for effect and avoid sexist language at other times.

[25] It is often heard, for example, that soldiers in the same troop would die for each other. Perhaps this kind of solidarity only comes from having an enemy; evolutionary psychologists might explain it this way, given that this type of group solidarity would be a good survival strategy in times of adversity. In a global troop of humanity or a planetary tribe, who would be our enemy? Perhaps those who refused to identify with that collectivity. So unless that collectivity aspires to diversity in the way described in this chapter, a global community might become quite repressive. Let us see.

Jainism, Ba'hai all said the same thing: treat others as you'd want them to treat you. The similarity with the concept of the collective pursuit is clear. Also, from my limited knowledge, most religions stress the importance of a person's own freewill in finding 'God' or choosing between good and evil. The parallel with the ethic of universal self-determination embodied in the concept of our common good is obvious.

Moreover, all religions celebrate how a spiritual experience can bring people to a state of consciousness where they give up their sense of selfishness and pursue loving lives. Whether it is the concept of lokasangraha in the Hindu Bhagwadgita (which means working to hold people together) or evangelism in the Bible, followers of religions are invoked to participate for our common good. It is not surprising then that religious leaders such as Jose Maria Vigil, a Nicaraguan liberation theologist, identified civil society as a place where one acts on religious conviction. We "create a new power through civil society, from within," he remarked (cited in Naidoo 2001).

One of the tragedies of organised religion is that despite the concept of freewill, men sought to manage people's access to spiritual experiences as an extremely powerful means of social control. "There is no God but Allah," for example, or "There is only one path to the Lord." Thus missionaries' evangelism involved them travelling to the tropics and converting people to *their* religion, ignoring freewill in the process. And I am writing this during the "war on terrorism" where the word "God" only seemed to come out of the mouths of idiots or psychopaths, seeking to control. Civil society thus seemed like a possible way of rescuing spirituality from these control-freaks.

My discussion of civil society wouldn't be the first time that secular work arrived at the same conclusions as spiritual work. The philosophers of the Enlightenment, Emmanuel Kant foremost among them, tried to deduce universally valid imperatives from reasoned logic (Scruton 1989). "The task Kant set himself was to show that reason provides a better basis for morality than traditional, external authority" (ibid. p. 89). Whether he was successful in this or not depends very much on your desire to believe in rational thought. He did, however, discover that we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us. Sound familiar? Thus rational thought discovered enlightened self-interest and imagined a common good quite similar to the one I described above.[27] The legacy of Emmanuel and his colleagues was that they helped translate religious ideas into

---

[26] Instead I put some references to relevant work in the footnotes.

[27] This does not mean being nice to everyone in a superficial sense. When people spoke of research ethics they often focused on what I would call the etiquette of research rather than ethics. In other words, trying not to upset your research subjects. The ethics of civil action-research are much more explicit. Upsetting your research subjects might be the best way of relating to them, if they are living or working in a way that contradicts our common good and therefore contradicts who they could become. If I was in that position (perhaps I am) I would want to be provoked in any way that might lead me to greater self-awareness. I thought quite a bit about how 'aggressive' I would be in my criticism of certain organisations, people and practices, but decided that it was

secular ones. Michael Pierce McKeever (2000) argued that the "articulation of human rights is a secular formulation of the spiritual notion of the dignity inherent in each person, and thus has its grounding in the basic principles of all the religions." The dignity of each person to pursue their individual preferences so as to discover their personal balance of living needs and attain happiness, perhaps?

I have not mentioned our environment much before now. I take it as given that actions causing irreparable damage to the environment contradict our collective pursuit.[28] Moreover, I believe that our experiences, security and sense of meaning, are all predicated on our place within the planetary ecosystem. It should be no surprise therefore that my conception of our common good finds parallels in eco-centric thought. By 2001 many people still assumed that the natural world obeyed the "law of the jungle" and "survival of the fittest." A vulgar form of Darwinism was prevalent, suggesting that the natural way of things was competition within species and between them. Evolutionary psychologists attempted to explain human nature and society on the basis of natural and sexual selection (Dawkins 1989). One thing they downplayed was the importance of intra-population cooperation that would help that population survive. They assumed a methodological individualism (believing in knowledge derived from studying individual entities) whereas an understanding of evolution might require a greater appreciation of the ecosystem as a whole[29]. Despite the dominant paradigm at the time, co-operative behaviour was found in nature, some of which could not be shown to increase the chances of individual reproduction - the scientific definition of altruism (Alcock 1993). Thus some biologists stressed the continually co-operative and diversifying aspects of nature, both at the level of an individual and at the level of an ecosystem (Sahtouris 2000). By the end of the nineties this was inspiring some in policy and management circles to use ecological metaphors for society (Wheatley 1998). "Life, in its essence, moves towards plurality, diversity, interdependence, self-constitution, and self-organisation - in short, towards the fulfilment of its own freedom" wrote Mille Bojer (2001, pers com), a co-ordinator of a network of progressive professionals, Pioneers of Change. Therefore "our own desire for autonomy and creativity is reflected in all life," suggested Margaret Wheatley (1998). Therefore people began to develop ethics based on the irresistibly diversifying attributes of life:

> *systems that create uniformity rather than diversity, that harm the ecosystem, that disrespect human life and community, that are blind to interdependence, that repress freedom, are wrong. We say such systems exist and they are powerful, they have been created by human beings, they affect our thinking and our behavior, we are taught to*

---

important to be provocative enough to stir a reaction. This is another outcome of my 'action-writing' approach which was not usual for a PhD thesis at the time I wrote this.

[28] Klaus Toepfer, while Executive Director of the UNEP, illustrated this when he said that "human rights cannot be secured in a degraded or polluted environment... The fundamental right to life is threatened by soil degradation and deforestation and by exposures to toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes and contaminated drinking water." UNEP (2001)

[29] In doing this they had to downplay the complex interactions between genes that create characteristics - or memes. Systems theorists were arguing that it was impossible to fully comprehend the function of any one gene as it interacted with others on the chromosome. Hence concerns about the longer term effects of genetic engineering. See Chapter 4 for more on systems theory.

reinforce them (Bojer 2001, pers com).[30]

We can see therefore that there are common elements to religious, rational and ecological thought, which lead to the same conclusion: to interfere with life's expression is wrong. From an enlightened religious viewpoint we shouldn't adversely interfere with the spiritual journey of others - it's a sin. From the rational viewpoint of enlightened self-interest we shouldn't adversely interfere with other people as we would not want that for ourselves - it's not sensible. From an eco-centric viewpoint we shouldn't adversely interfere with others as such action prevents the full expression of life - it's an ecological malfunction. Therefore what is 'good' is to create the conditions for people to flourish in whatever way they see fit, hoping, knowing, that their growing self-awareness will lead them to share that view.

So what are the aspects of human society that promote this collective ability to pursue our individual living preferences? Or in other words, what are the enablers of our common good? Concepts such as equality of opportunity; freedom, to and from; efficiency and capacity; sustainability; community and participation are helpful, but none more so than one we almost forgot the meaning of - democracy.

Civil Society as a Global Democracy Movement

There were some parallels to these ideas within the civil society literature. Marc Nerfin (1987) conceived of civil society as resulting from an autonomous power beyond governmental or economic power - the power of the people. He noted that some among the people become aware of this power, get together, act and become 'citizens'. The citizens and their associations, or movements, when they neither search nor exercise governmental or economic power, constitute a 'third system'. A number of publications at the turn of the millenium, such as *Global Citizen Action* (Edwards and Gaventa 2001) and *Third Force* (Florini 2000) reflected a similar view. These works suggested that the thinking on social movements and civil society was intermingling, offering the possibility of seeing civil society not so much as a sector but as a social movement. This intermingling was illustrated by mainstream researchers on civil society, who began to speak more openly about the role of values in driving civil society (Anheier et al. 2001). I haven't talked much about social movement theory, which reflects the division of literatures between different disciplines, mentioned above. Social movements have been said to "result from the more or less spontaneous coming together of people whose relationships are not defined by rules and

[30] I should add a word of warning here that the ecocentrics were prone to romanticise about ecosystems to the extent that they refused to acknowledge that, on an individual level, competition is as much a characteristic of life as co-operation and interdependence, and one of the interesting things about humankind is that we have escaped the process of evolution, as natural selection no longer weeds out the physically weakest (e.g. in a hunting culture short-sightedness would have hastened death). Thus we can take inspiration from nature but also from how we seem to differ from the rest of life, as conscious beings able to reflect and talk. However, some ecocentric perspectives consider that the non-human world also has a form of consciousness, and even that consciousness existed before matter. For many people these are open and interesting questions but an emerging dogmatic adherence to ecocentric thinking reflected a need for certainty that appears in most belief

procedures but who merely share a common outlook on society" (Encyclopedia Britannica, quoted in Kumar 2000).

Should we see civil society as a space of social movements, where people come together who share a common outlook, whatever outlook that might be, or might we see it as a particular social movement in itself, with a certain set of values? Marlies Glasius *(2001)* suggested that "instead of thinking of global civil society as people we like, espousing our favourite values, and contradictory phenomenon, definitely value-driven, but without one monolithic set of ethics" (*emphasis added*). More helpful to whom? Mainstream researchers, I guess, as it helped preserve illogical notions of impartiality that academia so cherished (see Chapter 4). We should never forget that naming things and concepts is a choice, we are not trying to discover something already out there somewhere - we create the conceptual world through our thinking and choice. We use the word 'table' for a table and 'chair' for a chair because we sit on one while using the other, so to call them all 'tablechairs' would not be as helpful as giving them separate identifiers. I am suggesting in this thesis that our common good, as described above, is at least as important to us as tables and chairs and we could chose to define civil society in a way that would be useful for our common good, rather than in a way that reflected the inadequacies of our academic paradigm.[31] In any case, it causes conceptual problems, because everything we do is shaped by our values, and so business and government are both value-driven organisations. Therefore I am suggesting that we identify a particular value to celebrate within civil society - the value of the collective pursuit.[32]

To me it seems quite simple. "Government" represents an uneasy truce between the competitive and self-interested aspects of human nature. That was what Thomas Hobbes (1996) was on about when he wrote *Leviathan* all those hundreds of years ago - we need some 'thing' to have a monopoly on force in order to prevent everyone from fighting. John Locke (1690/1960) then went on to say that that 'thing' needed legitimacy from the people who were under its force, and so the seeds of modern electoral democracies were planted. The modern business was borne by this thing - called a government - deciding to protect the property of a group of people, called a 'corporation'

---

systems. I believe this was made more likely by people's alienation from organised spiritual traditions, which had been perverted into methods of social control. In other words, people were seeking another story.

[31] Some within the academic community did construct a positive idea of civil society, seeing it as spreading solidarity, through the creation and articulation of identity (Cohen and Arato 1992, p. 346), or as a space of ideas and dialogue where "the moral community" would come together to consider "the problems of accountability, trust and co-operation" (Hann and Dunn 1996, p. 20). Their work also relates to Jurgen Habermas's (1962) view of civil society as a place of reasoned dialogue uninhibited by the interests of money and power. I am going beyond this though to suggest that civil society cannot be understood purely in terms of reason, but in terms of feelings and emotions. At dinner after a conference one female leader of a civil group told me she noticed how men always talk 'logically' about why they do something nice, rather than talk about the way they feel. Logical reasoning is based on language, which forms only part of what we are (see Chapter 4).

[32] For some reason, many researchers thought that the 'Third Sector' had to be the 'Final Sector'. Yet we do not have to assume that everything which is not A or B is therefore C. Instead we can lay claim to C as something with its own identity and let everything that doesn't fit fall into a separate 'uncategory'. Its then up to others whether they want to delve into this uncategory and put what they find into a new hold-all 'Fourth Sector' (although this term was being claimed by those seeking preferential tax status for profit-making companies with a dual purpose). Given the definitional problems described in this Chapter, some researchers argued for new terminology: "we should distinguish civic society from... civil society more generally. The latter consists of

and guarantee a mobile denominator of power, called 'money.' Thus business was also founded on the competitive and self-interested aspects of human nature. At the time of writing there was a lot of fuzzy thinking on the relationship of business and society. People started talking about social capital and social profits (Putnam 1993); www.Chaordic.org). The word 'profit' traditionally referred to the money extracted from a set of economic transactions by 'owners'. Over time this concept came to be understood as 'dividends' and in common parlance profit came to refer to company viability. Talk of the profit-motive was therefore confusing, as to some people it implied a dividend-motive, whereas to others it implied a motive to earn the best income for your work. The dividend-motive is undoubtedly a selfish-pursuit, as dividends or increased share-values are basically proxies for increasing one's power from an economic process, whether one works in that process or not. The advances in ethical or socially responsible investment (Chapter 3) represent either variations on the selfish pursuit, if an investor sees it as a sensible technique for investing in one's own economic well-being, or the belated insertion of unselfish values, if an investor sees it as something to do for our common good. The profit-motive can be understood as either a selfish or unselfish pursuit, depending on whether the person accessing the power/money from the economic process concerned already has more of an ability to pursue their individual preferences than others involved in that process. For example, the profit-motive of a small farmers' cooperative can not be seen in the same way as that of a corporation that might control their access to market.[33]

The commonality between capitalist firms and government, which makes it worthwhile being *non*profit and *non*governmental is that through capital or through taxes their aim is to systematically appropriate power from people. By *definition* then, nonprofits and nongovernmentals should be concerned with the *opposite* - the egalitarian distribution and co-creation of power - this being the enabling of our collective pursuit of individual preferences. Part of their advocacy role, in this case, is to try and democratise the institutions of business and government. In this way, civil society is not a space for social movements, but is a social movement in itself. It is a movement for global sustainable democracy.

Unfortunately the concept of democracy got lost somewhere between Athens and Washington. Demos, meaning people, kratos, meaning power. People power, or people rule. That doesn't mean elections every five years between tweedle dum and tweedle dee. 'Electoral democracy' is an erroneous idea. People around the world increasingly had elections. What they didn't have was democracy. People lived in electoral autocracies, not in electoral democracies.[34] Moreover, the

---

social networks at large... civic networks, on the other hand, serve some role in relation to legitimate governance – centrally as arenas for debate and participation" (Føllesdal 2001, p. 2).

[33] As I describe in Chapter 5, I do not see power as a zero-sum game, so increasing ones own power does not need to be at the expense of others. Thus a selfish pursuit is not necessarily antithetical to our common good (see Chapter 5).

[34] There are three 'moments' to electoral democracy. First, the generation of options; second, the promotion of options and; third, the selection of options. These moments occur at the levels of the electorate and the government (as well as in the other institutions of society). The counting of votes and the passing of laws are part of the third moment of electoral democracy. However, advertising, media, industry lobbyists, party donors

notion of democracy was connected to government, rather than a way of life. David Held (1997, p. 252) spotted this blind spot when he noted how "students of democracy have examined and debated at length ... within the boundaries of the nation state" but "they have not seriously questioned whether the nation-state can remain at the center of democratic thought."

John Isbister (2001, p. xi) noted that "an ideal democracy would give a voice to everyone who is affected by a decision. The real democracies with which we are familiar cannot reach this standard." For example, poor children were affected by welfare systems but had no vote. Women in the South were affected by family planning funding decisions in the United States but had no vote in their elections. The democracy I have in mind is a system of governance and a set of organisational forms that support the collective pursuit of individual preferences. This means a situation where individuals and communities have the capacity to participate effectively in shaping the social limits that define what is possible for them, without impairing the ability of others to do this for themselves. This is an everyday democracy where all organisations enable participation.[35] It is also inherently a global conception, because it is an administrative response to the universal principle of people being able to pursue their individual living preferences. I am talking about a global sustainable democracy, lived everyday. A spiritual democracy that comes from the heart, as Gregory Calvert (1991) once wrote.

In this light, the advocacy activity of people and groups within civil society can be seen to confront "the obstacles to (real) democracy (which are) constituted... by the two main forms of autocratic power: large corporations and centralised big governments" (Mouffe 1995, p. 298). The political project of civil society - perhaps even the new Left that Chantal Mouffe sought (1995) - can be understood as the democratisation of all organisational forms, state services, local government, national government, intergovernmental and international organisations. Moreover, to democratise their own institutions, and to democratise knowledge and, we must hope, spirituality.

Consequently we can be part of civil society, part of a global sustainable democracy movement, whether we are a working for a civil group, or as a housewife, business executive, government employee and so on. Thus we can describe two units within civil society - at the individual level, civil actors, and at the organisational level, civil groups. Being a civil actor is not a fixed quality of specific individuals - we all act unselfishly and selfishly at different times. When we act for our common good we are part of civil society. Thus volunteering, ethical consumption, ethical

---

and so on affect the first two moments of electoral democracy and thus restrict the third: voting patterns and government decisions. As Noam Chomsky has noted, "there has been a major current of intellectual opinion... holding that thought control is precisely in societies that are more free and democratic" (Chomsky 1992, p. 6).

[35] There was a sizeable literature on the concept of 'participatory democracy,' including critiques, which suggested that representative systems are more effective. Exploring this literature and the issues it raises was beyond the scope of this thesis. Suffice to say that either/or debates about representative versus participatory democracy often missed the point that we need various mechanisms of democracy at local, national and international levels, via different types of state, market and civil organisation.

intraprenuership, ethical entreprenuership, philanthropy, speaking out, ethical investment, unpaid and non-compulsory recycling - these are all civil actions.

Being a civil group is slightly more tricky. Indeed my definition is an ideal type of organisation – it is difficult to say if any really exist. Ideally then, civil groups are entities, legally incorporated or just organic networks, whose purpose is to serve at least one aspect of the collective pursuit of individual preferences. Often they are groupings of people taking civil action, but they don't have to be, as illustrated by Box 2.

Box 2: How Diverse Civil Society Groups and Actors Relate to Democracy And Empowerment.

Grassroots movements: e.g. anti-roads protest groups in the UK, were protesting against: an autocratically developed and implemented transport policy; the private degradation of public resources such as clean air, landscapes and a stable climate and; discrimination against people without enough money to own a car in a country where facilities were increasingly predicated on the car (e.g. out of town shopping centres)

Charitable foundations: e.g. the Ford Foundation, by distributing power (money) to those with less power (money) or those who want power (money) in order to benefit other people, was acting to enable to collective pursuit. This is not to say that it could not also fund quite regressive policy work. "Civil" is a transient adjective when applied to an organisation.

Cooperatives: e.g. a worker-owned rug factory in India, might be working to reduce the grip of autocratic supply chains and provide workers with more democratic control over their livelihoods - i.e. coop members might aim to increase their own democratic participation in the market. Note my discussion of the profit-motive above.

Member-based advocacy groups: e.g. Amnesty International aimed to defend the rights of people around the world, oppressed by autocratic forms of control and punishment.

Development groups: e.g. Oxfam worked to support the rights and welfare of people in the global South, who were suffering the ill-effects of environmental problems, colonial legacies, and unequal power relations in the global economy.

The civil society movement can therefore be understood as engaged in a process of continual democratisation of states, markets, and cultural institutions.[36] We could call this 'neocivilisation', where civilisation is a process and not (as we rather foolishly assumed in the West) our static, state of being at the start of the new Millennium.

[36] There were well-developed critiques of the assumption that civil groups promote 'democracy'. For example, Stephen Biggs and Arthur Neame (1995) argued that civil groups could not ensure "the delivery of democracy" (p. 35). The difference is that they were talking about how the top down intervention by donors in creating civil groups might affect the state and people's relation with it. My conception of civil society and of democracy is different.

The important thing for me to point out here is that corporations are not civil groups. In the naughties people were beginning to suggest that corporations could be part of civil society (Knight and Hartnell 2000; Zadek 2001). This ignored the fact that when for-profit corporations acted on issues of our common good, they had to do so while pursuing a selfish motive - profit. Corporate citizenship was founded on the idea that there was a business case for companies acting on issues of our common good (Chapter 3). Therefore, companies were increasingly acting on issues concerning our common good because it was in their private interests. For directors to do otherwise and give corporate money (or make decisions) entirely altruistically, would be acceptable if it was a family owned company, but would have been breaking the law if the company was publicly traded. This is not to say that companies could not have a positive impact on society while pursuing their financial self-interest. And it is not to deny that individuals working within corporations might be civil actors themselves - after all we are all human with selfish and unselfish aspects to our characters. However, I felt that if people could not accept that there was a strong selfish motive to for-profit business then they shouldn't be working in business - indeed I hoped more people might leave for-profits and begin providing goods and services in a nonprofit manner. Unfortunately as the notion of corporate social responsibility (CSR) took hold I found many people did not want to see this, as it would undermine their comforting assumption that they could pursue a well-paid job within a corporation while serving our common good. The mistake they made was to think that working *on* the common good is the same as working *for* the common good. It is not, as the chapters in this thesis will demonstrate.

Telling Stories

At various points throughout this chapter I have emphasised that we choose our concepts and words to describe phenomena, and that some academics had ignored this, preferring to derive 'self-evident' concepts from observing and counting physical forms such as organisations. As I describe in Chapter 4, all knowledge is fiction, in the sense that it is created in our minds. All concepts and social theories, such as "civil society" are *stories* helping to explain our world and our place in it. I don't mean this pejoratively. Yet some people were uncomfortable with this, preferring the certainty of a clockwork universe that could be physically seen and described. We forgot our own creativity in the process of knowing. We forgot we believed in stories.

Was there a grand story of our reality? For some it was the story of a secular, scientific, mechanical world without meaning. Not much of a story. For some it was the story of a God creating us to struggle to return to 'Him'. For many people that story played more like a fairytale - a nice idea, something they didn't really believe. Praying to "our heavenly father" just seemed a bit silly to a lot of people (yet it was comforting and they wished it could be true). To others this story seemed like a nightmare with a "blind, deaf, dumb, mad or bad" God. Thus Thomas Berry, writing in 1990, felt that we had lost faith in the story of our relationship with a God and, therefore, who we were:

> *We are in trouble just now because we do not have a good story. We are in between stories. The old story, the account of how the world came to be and how we fit into it... sustained us for a long period of time. It shaped our emotional attitudes, provided us with life purposes and energized our actions. It consecrated our suffering and integrated our knowledge. We awoke in the morning and knew where we were. We could answer the questions of our children (Berry 1990).*

This faltering between stories was sometimes talked about as the 'death of God'. Hence the angst and spiritual void captured in Rik Strong's *The Sermon*. But this was not the end of story telling. I began this chapter with doom and gloom because I wanted to register the pain and anguish being created by hyper-capitalism in order to explain why we believed another world was necessary. Yet there was another story to tell about our lives. On the streets of Genoa the T-shirts read "Another world is possible" - a world that would enable us all to be all we could be. In our hearts that world already existed. But, as Robert Theobold (2000) wrote, those of us who were conscious of our predicament were still piecing together a way of talking about this. We were creating a new story about why we are here and what is important to us, yet we didn't quite have a shared way of expressing this and were, therefore, not speaking in chorus so that the rest of society could hear us and join in the singing.

As man apprehends himself as free and wishes to use his freedom, then his activity is to play.

Jean Paul-Sartre.

So what is this story? There were some clues emerging. In the west pop-culture gurus like Pat Kane (2000) started talking of a play ethic to replace the work ethic. By this he meant that the most natural, and perhaps highest, state of being was to play - to be creative, to be expressive, to test, try, experiment, to have fun in becoming all we can be. The parallels with eco-centric thought on the irrepressible diversity of the natural world are clear. Pat suggested that this play ethic came from the new generation of young professionals, who:

> *have shaped their identities through their... cultures of play - a whole range of self-chosen activities that have anchored them in a different orientation towards a meaningful life. These are the backpackers of Alex Garland's The Beach, using cheap flights and travel literature to make the world their playground.*

The ultimate playfulness is to help each other to play together. And so, for some, old identities were dying and people beginning to feel like they were 'earthlings' - members of a planetary tribe. People spoke of a growing global consciousness, a sense of a common community of mankind (Robertson 1990; Russell 2001; Shaw 2000; Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers 1998). For many people nationalism was no longer a belief system and had become just a bit of fun, to be enjoyed in an ironic sense. Nationalism was being replaced by this new global consciousness and a planetary patriotism - we might call this *Planetism*. This meant a deep concern for the health and well-being of the planet and all its peoples. Another aspect to this Planetism was a spiritual re-awakening, as people began to see a common essence to all the world's spiritual teachings, no matter how twisted they had become through the manipulation of religious institutions. This re-awakening was helped in secular society by the club culture, as 'ravers' grew up but couldn't (or wouldn't) "forget those blissed-out moments of transcendence, when drugs and beats blurred the

boundaries of their selves" (Kane 2000). These states of consciousness were something that ecocentrist Thomas Berry pondered. If the universe is not alive in a psychic spiritual sense as well a material one, then "human consciousness emerges out of nowhere... an addendum [with] no real place in the story of the universe" (Berry 1990, p. 132). Thus the potential for a spiritual unity was emerging amongst the diverse traditions of eco-centric, religious and secular thought - an autonomous yet interconnected spirituality in keeping with the goal of self-expression. *The new story of humanity is about our growing understanding of our relationship to our planet, including all its people and their spiritual selves. Therefore it is the story of our relationship to ourself - who we really are. The new story is that there will be infinite stories to unfold.*

Chances are, we'll have to win
Bob Marley

Thus, in protests around the world people were saying one No and many Yes's. "We're not going to play your games anymore - thrill to your icons, your hip soundtracks, your latest double-stitch or lycra mix. We're going to play our own games" (Kane 2000). And so play we did, from our use of the web to co-ordinate global protests, to the subversion of advertising, from the rave atmosphere of street parties, to the humour of slogans, from the creation of alternative currencies, to the launching of our own social businesses. "It's the combination of spontaneity and absorption, of applied creativity and voluntary action - in short, their identity as players - that [defined anti-capitalist] politics" (Kane 2000).

When I wrote this I had great hope that the concept of civil society could play a role in the telling of this new story. It didn't look like this would be easy. For one, the term civil society was being emptied of any meaning by people living and working with an old story. Meanwhile, as I argued in a closing speech at a 2001 Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) conference on direct action, the 'anti-capitalist movement' was being influenced by old patriarchal notions of politics, and becoming distracted by its own 'success' in gaining media attention.[37] Worse than all this, key players in the global capitalist system were zooming ahead driven by a desire to homogenise and maximise - to suppress diversity and control for narrow self-interest. The following excerpt from *The 1997 Coca-Cola Annual Report* (Coca-Cola 1998) illustrates the challenge we faced:

> *1 billion down, 47 billion to go. This year even as we sell 1 billion servings of our products daily, the world will still consume 47 billion servings of other beverages everyday. We are just getting started.*

---

[37] By looking in the mirror of the mainstream media coverage we risked thinking that summit protests were what we were about. Our frustration and anger risked blocking out our values of compassion and solidarity, which had led us to become frustrated and angry in the first place. We risked focusing on the performance of protest, rather than the principle of taking responsibility to effect positive change through our lives. We were also at risk of what I'd call the 'lads effect.' Many people were interested in appealing to their contemporaries and keeping activists together, which often led some to condone acts of petty violence by demonstrators. The lads effect also encouraged people to objectify and demonise 'opponents' which was antithetical to liberational thinking. This risked a spiral of violence, which could be tactically provoked by regressives, that would divide activists, alienate them from the millions dependent on corporate media for their news, and help justify state repression. (See http://belgium.indymedia.org and *Schnews* Issue 336 at www.schnews.org.uk for reports on "undercover cops" directing violence at the Laeken summit in Belgium).

So were we...

CHAPTER THREE. 21st Century Superpowers: The New International Relations of Business and Civil Society.

> *Monsanto's field trials... will be reduced to ashes in a few days. These actions will start a movement of direct action by farmers against biotechnology, which will not stop until all the corporate killers like Monsanto, Novartis, Pioneer etc. leave the country... [T]hese actions can also pose a major challenge to the survival of these corporations in the stock markets. Who wants to invest in a mountain of ashes, in offices that are constantly being squatted (and if necessary even destroyed) by activists?*
>
> *Professor Nanjundaswamy, Karnataka State Farmers Association*

In 1998, Indian farmers in the Karnataka region, chanting "Cremate Monsanto" and "Stop Genetic Engineering", uprooted and burned genetically engineered cotton fields in front of the mass media. Civil groups including the Karnataka State Farmers Association, were calling on the biotechnology company Monsanto to 'get out of India', and for the government to ban field tests and imports of genetically modified (GM) seeds and crops. This was just one episode in a global campaign against Monsanto - orchestrated by diverse, autonomous, yet internetworking, civil groups covering issues such as farmer security, environmental risk, consumer health and corporate power. Most governments had been supportive of the commercialisation of genetic modification (GM) technology, so activists had decided to target the companies directly. This civil campaign meant that the market for GM products dried up as retailers said they would not sell food with GM ingredients. Monsanto was forced into a number of policy U-turns, including the shelving of its 'terminator technology' (infertile seeds) and the provision of royalty-free licences for its technologies that might help the development of vitamin-A enriched rice. These moves were not enough to save the company from evaporating investor confidence, and its share price fell to the extent that is was taken over (Bendell 2001d). The public-fall of Monsanto made people realise that the previous high-profile row in the mid-nineties between Shell and environmental groups over Brent Spar oil platform and with human rights groups over its operations in Nigeria, were not unique.

Governmental approval for the conduct of transgovernmental corporations was not enough to save them from severe criticism that compelled these companies to change their policies and practices. While commentators had already considered that transgovernmental corporations (TGCs) were the Goliaths of globalisation, they now witnessed the power of a multitude of brand-bashing Davids, armed with the catapult of conviction. The internet had provided these Davids with the chance to share information and organise, so their slingshots could hit the Achilles heel of corporates - their highly-valued reputations. Writing on human rights at the turn of the millennium, Barbara Rose Johnston considered that this marked "the emergence of a political force whose power and impact cannot be overstated" (1997, p. 323).

International relations (IR) theorists had already begun to suggest that if we realised the "condition of sovereignty" was "a relatively recent and contentious set of practices rather than a naturally

evolving wisdom" we could "liberate flows of ideas and sentiments" (Shapiro 1991, p.474). Some IR researchers recognised the need to look again at the role of TGCs and intergovernmental agencies through less state-centred glasses (Booth and Smith 1996). Some were beginning to respond to the call of progressive theorists such as Susan Strange (1996, p. 198) for more work on civil society as a possible "opposition... to check the arbitrary or self-serving use of power and to see that it is used at least in part for the common good," by considering how the advocacy work of civil groups affected intergovernmental policy processes (Hudson 1998; Yanacopulos 1999). Mainstream civil society researchers noted how it was playing a rapidly growing role in governance (Florini 2000) and began wondering whether global civil society might be a "viable way of 'taming', 'humanising', 'calling to account', indeed *'civilising' globalisation*" (Anheier et al. 2001, p. 16, emphasis added). As financier George Soros (1998, p. 103) noted, "the capitalist system can be compared to an empire that is more global in its coverage than any previous empire." Therefore if Alexis de Tocqueville was alive at the time it is probable he would have been fascinated by how 'civil society' might be checking the power of this global capitalist empire, not the nation state.[38] As Richard Hyman (2001, p. 49) pondered, perhaps civil society could be a way of "subjecting market forces to conscious social control"?[39]

Most of the management literature did not consider such broad conceptual issues and focused on describing how relations between corporations and civil groups were growing in importance and suggesting how participants might manage them better, to corporate advantage (Hartman and Stafford 1997; Neal and Davies 1998; Peters 1999; Winter and Steger 1998) or mutual advantage (Long and Arnold 1995; Murphy and Bendell 1997a; Murphy and Bendell 1997b; Rondinelli and London 2001; Stern and Hicks 2000; Zadek 2001; Zadek and Forstater 1999).

Apart from Peter Newell (2001a; 2001b) this literature did not often cross-fertilize with the disciplines of international relations (IR) or development studies. This was illustrated by a rare article on these issues in *Foreign Policy* (Gereffi et al. 2001), which did not reference much management literature on this topic. Moreover, mainstream research on civil society and the non-profit sector continued to conceive of relations with the private sector within the context of corporate philanthropy[40]. Walter Wymer was putting together a special issue of the *Non-Profit*

---

[38] It seemed that political science had not yet risen to the call of people like David Held and Susan Strange to escape state-centrism. For example, Russell Mokhiber and Robert Weissman found that at the American Political Science Association 2000 convention, there were virtually no papers that focused on -- or even referenced -- corporate power. From a website of abstracts for 1,000 papers presented, only three dozen abstracts touched on business or corporations -- which represented 3.6 percent of all papers (BizEthics Buzz 2001).

[39] Myself and a number of colleagues writing within the sustainable development management literature had already been discussing these issues within a non-state-centred paradigm (Bendell 2000c). We were looking at the international relations between TGCs and global civil society or what Richard Welford called the "superpowers of the 21st Century" (in Bendell 2000c).

[40] For example, Aspen Institute's 'Nonprofit Sector Strategy Group', which assembled leading academics and practitioners in the field, reported that civil groups realised the importance of co-operating with business "in order to secure needed resources and further validate their [own] activities" (Aspen Institute 2001, p. 6).

Sector Quarterly on the topic of the changing relations between civil groups and business. He noted that:

> *Much of the work done which deals with collaborations between nonprofits and businesses looks at the associations from the standpoint of enlightened self-interest. The business wants favorable publicity. The nonprofit wants resources... [Your work considers] how [civil groups] can affect business behavior... not as a means toward gaining resources for the nonprofits, but as an end in itself. (Wymer 2001, pers com).*[41]

One woman did more than anyone to raise the profile of relations between business and civil society, with her book *No Logo* (Klein 2000). In the latter part of that bestseller, Naomi Klein gleefully chronicled the trademark trouble suffered by Nike, Starbucks, Wallmart and other well-known corporations at the hands of brand-bashing civil activists. What she didn't consider too closely was what civil activists were doing once their campaigns had elicited a response. She rightfully attacked the way some corporations were adopting codes of conduct without enforcing them and the way some were claiming that codes and labelling schemes could solve the problems of the global economy without state or intergovernmental regulation. She argued that trying to assure the rights of workers with a label represented "nothing less than the wholesale privatisation of their (and our) political rights" (ibid, 2000, p 429). This ignored what civil activists might be achieving for workers and sustainable development more immediately within the context of those constraints of global capitalism identified by critics. Kelly Currah (2000, pers com), of the civil group World Vision, wrote to me of his concern about a lack of balanced in-depth analysis and:

> *how little literature there is on the downside of partnership - the problems of co-option and mission creep that [civil groups] are so open to. Too much of the literature comes through on the 'new paradigm' form, which I do not think is true. However, most of the anti-partnership material comes form the anti-corporate section - activists - which again does not look at an adequate balance of the argument.*

There was a dearth of research drawing on social and political theory in order to consider the importance of protest and partnership between business and civil society. In this thesis I attempt to alleviate this inadequacy: to consider what happens once the pickets go home, the tear-gas clears and the media moves onto the next bad news story. So I moved away from my previous focus on environmental issues, and away from the US and Europe, where most research on these issues had taken place, to the Latin American country of Costa Rica, which was being hailed as a success story for neo-liberal economic policies, representing a model of the future for many of its neighbours. A key export, banana, was one of the first trades to be subjected to the new governance structure of the global economy, as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) deliberated on its future. Meanwhile, as I began my PhD in 1997 a campaign about the plight of workers in Costa Rican banana plantations was just kicking off and so I decided to follow the campaign.

---

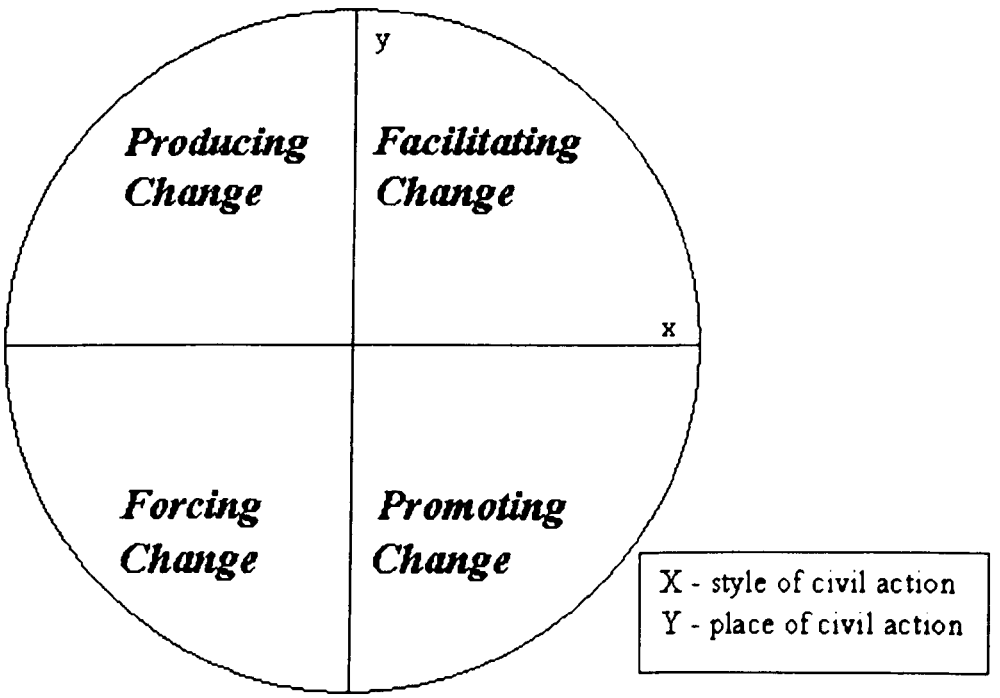
[41] This was still unusual, as illustrated by the fact my paper on strategic civil society-business relations was the only one on this topic at the 1998 International Society for Third Sector (ISTR) conference (Bendell 1998a), and only one of three in the 2000 conference (Simon Heap, Rupesh Shah and myself being relegated to a Saturday morning slot). We were presenting findings that later appeared in what was, at that time, the only book on these issues written specifically for a civil society audience (Heap 2000).

What happened since then forms the basis of Chapters 6 to 11. In this chapter I explore the diversity of relations between business and civil society, in order to frame the issues arising out of the banana case studies. In the following section I introduce a typology of confrontational and collaborative civil tactics, and suggest a way of conceptualising their effects as *civil regulation*, before contrasting this with some other concepts that were being discussed at the time of writing. I summarise evidence about why corporations would be responding positively to these civil tactics, before considering some of the questions being asked about the potential and limits of civil regulation - issues to which I return throughout this thesis.

Typology of Corporate-Influencing Civil Action

I developed the following typology through email communications with Steve Waddell, in 1999, when he was at the research institute Independent Sector. The idea is to describe the activities of civil groups that are intended to directly influence corporate policy and practice on a range of issues relating to our common good. It can also help to frame a discussion of the actions of individual civil actors, given my non-sectoral definition of civil society (Chapter 2, p. 29). The typology includes two variables: the 'place' of the civil action in relation to the market and the 'style' of the civil action in relation to the corporate activity being influenced. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Typology of Corporate-Influencing Civil Action



The 'style' of a civil action (X) is the result of a number of factors, such as the ideology of the civil group/actor, the skills they possess, the success or failure of previous campaigns, and the responsiveness of the businesses in question. On the one hand there are confrontational approaches

to corporations - the stick approach - and on the other hand there are collaborative approaches - the carrot approach. The second variable is the 'place' of the civil action (Y) in relation to the market economy: in other words, whether the civil group/actor is dependent on raising revenue in the market economy, or not. The typology therefore describes four types of corporate-influencing civil action: *forcing, promoting, facilitating* and *producing change*. Different civil groups/actors seemed inclined to different types of activity depending on a number of factors, such as whether or not they discriminated between companies depending on their environmental and social performance and therefore sought to work with the leaders. Many civil groups undertook different types of activity for a given objective, depending on the responsiveness of the corporation. In the following sections I briefly outline examples for each type of tactic.

Forcing Change

A well-known management analyst, Peter Senge (2001, pers com) remarked that "the easiest way to produce change is through fear. Fear is the motivator, not aspirations, in our institutional lives." And this is what most civil activists believed as they set about *forcing change* in corporate policy and practice, using various methods of applying 'pester pressure' on companies. Organising consumer boycotts was one tactic, often in conjunction with media-friendly stunts that would put executives in the awkward position of having to answer questions from journalists about their company's activities.[42]

Demonstrations at corporate offices, retail outlets, or annual general meetings were another tactic used against companies. Often these tactics were linked with activism on-the-ground. For example, one day in 1997 in a small garment factory in Guatemala workers turned up wearing white T-Shirts with "Queremos un Pacto" (we want a contract) written on the front. They were making clothes for Phillips-Van Heusen (PVH) and the same day outside stores selling PVH clothes in New York were civil activists handing out leaflets detailing the poor working conditions in the Guatemalan factory. The New York activists also wore white T-Shirts. Written across them was the slogan "We want a contract." PVH executives became concerned and within weeks "for one of the very first times in the history of [Guatelmala's] export-oriented manufacturing sector, local managers and a legally established union negotiated a collective bargaining agreement that significantly improved worker's conditions" (Anner 2000).[43]

---

[42] Boycotts of consumer products from companies such Levi Strauss and Pepsi, because of their operations in Burma (under military dictatorship at the time), were successful in persuading them to withdraw from the country: but not before Pepsi had lost a $1 million contract with Harvard University because of the 'Free Burma Campaign' boycott (Bendell 2000c). Similarly boycotts of timber retailers across Europe throughout the nineties because of their trade in wood originating from trashed forests were key to the widespread adoption of responsible wood purchasing policies by home improvement stores and other retail outlets (Murphy and Bendell 1997b).

[43] Traditional forms of action such as strikes were used, but not as often as previously, reflecting a change in political tactics, described below. This typology focuses on direct relations, but civil activists continued pursuing traditional litigation, as well as foreign direct liability litigation (Newell 2001b), and lobbying for better national and intergovernmental regulation (Hudson 1998).

The conditions of workers making goods sold in the West had become a media story. As British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) producer Sue Lloyd Roberts (1998, pers com) told assembled business executives at an ethical trading conference:

> *For TV journalists like me it is a field day, as there is tremendous appetite to expose M&S, C&A, Gap and so on...half starved workers and miserable children in the factories supplying well known companies make for great pictures... The bigger the company the better when shooting the footage.*

Companies had moved onto the frontpages. Simon Heap (2000) reviewed various campaigns and concluded that civil groups had "brought considerable pressure to bear on... companies by exposing intolerable conditions experienced by workers producing goods for high street stores in the USA and Europe" (p. 105). Why did exposure create pressure? I discuss the various theories below, but according to CAFOD's Duncan Green (1997) civil groups believed that "press coverage about exploitative working conditions" could "swiftly tarnish a brand name which has taken years to establish with the costs of hundreds of millions of dollars in advertising and product endorsement." Some in business also believed this with a health and safety management journal arguing that companies could "choose to be responsible and proactive or be forced to respond to growing consumer pressure" (Roy 1999, p. 13). Thus, sometimes just the threat of a campaign had the desired effect of changing or giving impetus to company policy and practice. *Newsweek* (Miller 2001) reported in April 2000 that:

> *San Francisco-based Global Exchange planned a 30-city protest to force Starbucks to sell beans sold by cooperatives that defend the interests of small growers. The company dispatched senior executives to agree to the demands, and Global Exchange backed off.*

One of the most high-profile forcing change campaigns did not involve a boycott but general advocacy to create outcry amongst people in government, the UN system, the media and the wider business community. The issue was how pharmaceutical companies were hindering the treatment of millions of HIV/AIDS[44] sufferers in the global South by their pricing and patenting of anti-retroviral drugs. Civil groups like Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF - Doctors Without Borders) had been campaigning on this issue for a while and were joined by others including the British aid agency Oxfam. They published a report on the largest pharmaceutical company in the world, GlaxoSmithKlein (GSK), in which they called on the company to either slash the costs of its drugs for treating diseases in poor countries or give up its patents on those drugs. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan joined the calls for action, especially when 39 pharmaceutical companies went to the Pretoria High Court to challenge a South African law aimed at easing access to AIDS drugs. The companies claimed that the law unfairly invalidated patent protections by giving the health minister broad powers to produce - and import more cheaply - generic versions of drugs still under patent. The fact that more than 4.5 million South Africans were infected with HIV, while five of the TGCs suing the government had global sales more than three times South Africa's national budget highlighted the imbalance. "It is indefensible for billion-dollar drug companies to take

[44] Human Immuno-deficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

South Africa to court to stop it buying cheap essential medicines" said Oxfam Policy Director Justin Forsyth. "This court case demonstrates how powerful drug companies are bullying poor countries just so they can protect their patent rights on life-saving medicines" (quoted in Bendell 2001d).

Within weeks the pharmaceutical industry dramatically dropped its case against the government, and began cutting the costs of their drugs. *The Financial Times* suggested the companies were fighting a price war as they sought to outbid each other and generic manufacturers to supply cheap Aids drugs to Africa. This 'price war' reached a significant point when Pfizer Inc announced it would offer an antifungal medicine at *no charge* to HIV/AIDS patients in 50 least-developed countries where HIV/AIDS was most prevalent (Bendell 2001d)

Civil groups also attempted to force change by buying shares in companies and then tabling motions at their annual general meetings (AGMs). In the US activists launched 'Spank the Bank,' targeting Citigroup on a rainbow of issues, including their financing of the controversial Three Gorges Dam in China (Miller 2001). In 2001 there were 158 shareholder resolutions on social issues put to US corporations (Bendell 2002). UK-based Friends of the Earth purchased US$43,000 worth of shares in Balfour Beatty to guarantee itself a voice at the UK company's annual meeting, in order to launch a shareholder challenge to Balfour Beatty's involvement in the Ilisu Dam project in Turkey (World Monitors 2001c). Not only did they succeed in persuading the management to drop their planned investment, but Balfour's share price rose upon their announcement of the decision, providing a nice return to the environmental group!

Individual shareholders were taking civil action themselves, by putting their money in funds that screened out certain companies they didn't want to invest in or that didn't meet certain social or environmental standards. Whether these tactics were confrontational or not depended on the response of the companies in question. As I will describe below, an increasing number of people took civil action by putting their shares in 'social responsible investments' where the fund managers didn't so much screen out companies but sought to engage constructively with them on social and environmental issues. This seemed to be working, as management began responding to resolutions even before they reached AGMs. For example, Walden Asset Management filed a resolution with American International Group (AIG), an insurance and financial services company, relating to policies for eliminating bias based on sexual orientation. The resolution was withdrawn when AIG agreed to adopt and implement a written equal employment opportunity policy barring discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (SocialFunds.com 2001).

These are just a few examples of how civil action was forcing change in corporate policy. However, as these last examples show, these actions no longer seemed so confrontational when the corporations began responding positively. The fact is that tactics aimed at forcing change often

worked by raising an issue and gaining a general commitment from a corporation; the real importance of this as a contribution to our common good depended on the subsequent processes of implementation[45] (Bendell 2000c; Murphy and Bendell 2001; Murphy and Bendell 1999; Murphy and Bendell 1997b). As Peter Senge (Senge 2001, pers com) added to his discussion of what drives organisations - "fear is short-term" - and so civil action needed to help shape corporate aspirations as well as their fears.

Promoting Change

Another group of activities that operated outside the market, in the sense that they also relied on voluntary donations of time, resources and money -- rather than selling services -- aimed at *promoting change* in corporate behaviour. These were collaborative activities including negotiating agreements with corporate management, advising companies on best practice, endorsing or promoting best practice (thereby supporting ethical consumerism and investment), conducting and publishing helpful research, or jointly developing new products or techniques[46]. In 1995/6, I worked with the World-Wide Fund for Nature UK (WWF-UK), to engage with 47 companies including supermarkets, home improvement stores and timber traders, in order to support and encourage their implementation of responsible wood purchasing polices (Bendell and Sullivan 1996). At that time in the US the civil group Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) was making a name for itself by managing a number of projects with corporations dealing with issues from solid waste management to carbon emissions, while emphasising its financial independence from the corporations with which it worked (Murphy and Bendell 1997b).

Although the history of industrial relations was, in many parts of the world, characterised by confrontation, a new era of collaborative global industrial relations appeared to be possible by 2001. National trade unions had been working together to increase affiliation to global federations such as the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers (IFBWW), the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Worker's Unions (ICEM) the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Federation (ITGLWF), and Union Network International (UNI). Together these federations were helping to give a global voice to the 200 million members of trade unions world-wide (Graham 1998, pers com). All these federations had signed framework agreements with TGCs. These allowed unions to deal with corporations at a global level on the basis of common principles, including the fundamental rights of workers that were incorporated in

[45] To illustrate, I met countless 'CSR managers' at conferences, who had been freshly appointed after their employer had been hurt by civil activists. They were nearly always new to the subject, nervous of activists, and made ripe pickings for the management consultants proffering what seemed like simple 'CSR solutions'. It was therefore increasingly important for civil activists to shape what these managers and their consultants would do in response.

core conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO), while also upholding the principle that disputes should be resolved by local union representatives. In just over a year the number of agreements had risen from 2 to 9 (Bendell 2001d). ICEM's Ian Graham (1998) believed these agreements offered "one of the best chances yet of improving global companies' communications with their stakeholders – in the interests of the community as a whole." Statoil's Vice President, Geir Westgaard, said his company's agreement with ICEM "made good business sense" because civil groups "are globe-spanning knowledge-based organizations. They give us early warning of problems we should be aware of, and allow us to take early action to mitigate risks" (Bendell 2001d).

Individual civil action aimed at promoting change was not something I had 'studied' closely, although most of my own activity could be categorised as such. In the late-nineties I organised half a dozen meetings to promote dialogue between civil groups, companies and consultants on social and environmental standards.[47] Those corporate executives that were particularly active in trying to change corporate policy and practice, 'ethical intrapreneurs,' can also be placed within this category of civil action. A member of the public phoning up or writing to a company to enquire about their ethical performance would also fit within this category.

For some of these initiatives, such as the framework agreements, it was too early to say what they had achieved for the long term. I give a detailed analysis of the initial outcomes of WWF's work with timber companies elsewhere (Murphy and Bendell 1999; Murphy and Bendell 1997b). What it achieved in the short-term was the creation of significant market demand for wood products certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) - nearly seven hundred companies, representing 7% of the world's wood consumption, were either buying or selling FSC timber (World Monitors 2001c). The FSC represented another form of civil action, *facilitating change* in corporate practice.

Facilitating Change

An increasing number of civil groups were operating 'inside' the market in their efforts at *facilitating change* in corporate practice. This meant that the success of their civil actions depended on their ability to sell services. One example were the consultancy services that aimed to help corporations with change processes: the civil group New Economics Foundation (NEF) being a pioneer of this. Another group of services related to the assessment and endorsement of companies' management systems or products. Civil groups like the Soil Association certified food products on the basis of organic criteria, and wood products on the basis of responsible forestry

[46] My two previous books -- *In the Company of Partners* (Murphy and Bendell 1997b) and *Terms for Endearment* (Bendell 2000c) -- explored these relationships, often called partnerships, in detail.

standards. Their forestry certification work was overseen and accredited by another civil group, called the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), which aimed to provide a credible guarantee to consumers that wood products came from well-managed forests. This was a membership body, bringing together stakeholders from different sectors and with different and sometimes opposing views, to agree standards for responsible forestry and how forest inspections should be carried out by accredited certifiers, as well as how products should be traced from certified forests and then labelled and advertised in stores. By October 2001, 345 logging operations and 23.8 million hectares of forests had been certified within the FSC system. I was involved in helping transfer this organisational model into the fishery sector, while I was working at WWF-UK. This helped to establish the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), in partnership with the world's largest buyer of frozen fish, the Anglo-Dutch corporation Unilever. Although these accreditation bodies were supported in part by grants and membership fees, they sold their accreditation service to certifiers. Their ultimate success in facilitating change in corporate practice depended on the acceptance of their certifications in the business community and the success of their logos in the marketplace.

These stewardship councils illustrate the way new institutions were being established to oversee social and environmental standards for corporate practice.[48] Each of those organisations had a different level of transparency and accountability to civil groups, leading to different priorities within these organisations and different concerns amongst stakeholders. The MSC, for example, was unlike the FSC in not having a membership, and had a 'top-down mode' of decision making, which alienated many groups, particularly those in the international development community who thought the organisation catered too much for TGCs and not the needs of fishing communities in the global South (Heap and Fowler 2000). The fact that advice I have when the MSC was being set up about the need for it to be a membership body was over-ruled by consultants from Coopers and Lybrand[49] made me realise the problems that could arise during the 'professionalisation' that occurs when facilitating change. It also made me realise that both environmentalists and business people did not necessarily understand how their specific issues of concern might relate to broader societal changes and needs. Rather than merely impelling policy changes civil activists needed to be involved in the initiatives and institutions that arose from these changes.

This became clearer to me as I watched the FSC develop. On many levels the work of civil groups to establish the FSC had been a great success. FSC certification had ensured better management in forests in 48 different countries, reducing the pressure from western companies upon the world's

---

[47] These meetings depended on mine and other people's voluntary donations of time and money. My two previous books were also aimed at promoting change by moving debate and action forward (they were not lucrative activities!).

[48] Initiatives working on labour standards issues included Clean Clothes Campaign (www.cleanclothes.org, Fair Labour Association (www.fairlabor.org), UN Global Compact (www.globalcompact.org, Global Reporting Initiative (www.globalreporting.org), Worldwide Apparel Production (www.wrapapparel.org, and the Workers Rights Consortium (www.workersrights.org) and the Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability (www.accountability.org.uk).

[49] This firm merged with Price Waterhouse in the late nineties to form PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).

forests. However, as I predicted in my undergraduate dissertation (Bendell 1995), these efforts served to alter the patterns of the international timber trade, with little or no effect on tropical deforestation - the original concern of the WWF forest campaign in the early nineties. This was illustrated by the fact that 6 years later 84% of certified forests were in the North (Bass et al. 2001). I was therefore concerned when civil groups like WWF argued against other initiatives which might tackle global deforestation, such as a global forest convention, and when they began appointing people from industry to head their forest work, as this would restrict their work to certification, which was a small piece of the deforestation puzzle. What I hadn't predicted was how certification would disproportionately benefit large commercial operations, which owned 85% of all certified forests. Stephen Bass (2001, p. 24) argued that "there are aspects of the FSC's standards and their assumption of 'western' scientific forestry, that conspire against smaller companies and community groups...[whose]... local norms and practices are not recognised by standards."

The challenges of promoting and facilitating change in business were therefore complex and form the main focus of my thesis.

Producing Change

Another type of civil action, which I do not explore in this thesis, aims at *producing change* in the market, by providing alternative production and trading systems based on a different value system to mainstream business practice. Civil groups launched a variety of 'fairtrade' organisations to try and offer a way of linking disadvantaged producers with responsible consumers. Two different types of organisation emerged, namely alternative trade organisations (ATOs) and fair-trade labelling organisations (FTLOs). The first ATOs began to operate in the 1950s and 1960s purchasing goods from disadvantaged producers with a view to promoting their development as part of 'goodwill selling' and later 'solidarity trade' (Tallontire 2000). Examples included Traidcraft in the UK and Fair Trade Organisatie (formerly SOS Wereldhandel) in the Netherlands. Some time later FtLOs emerged, the first and probably best known being Max Havelaar. In 1997 they joined up with similar organisations in other countries, to form 'FLO' - Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International. By 2001 this group had 17 member organisations. They issued fairtrade labels to manufacturers or importers whose production or supply of a particular product met specified standards, including the payment of a guaranteed price that included a 'social premium' to fund development activities. By 2001, you could buy fairtrade coffee, tea, banana, sugar, orange juice and cocoa. The market for fairtrade products grew steadily throughout the nineties, averaging $400 million in retail sales each year in Europe and the USA, equivalent to 0.01% of global trade (Littrell and Dickson 1999). Coffee was the most heavily traded fairtrade product, yet the 20,000 tonnes of coffee beans involved paled in comparison with the annual production of six million tonnes. The fairtrade product with the highest market share was banana in Switzerland, which reached a 15% market share. Anne Tallontire and colleagues noted, however, that there remained a

large gap between the number of people who claimed to prefer goods with ethical characteristics and the actual sales figures for fairtrade consumption (Tallontire et al. 2001).

At the time of writing in the UK there was an upsurge in interest by young professionals in setting up their own companies, which incorporated different values to the mainstream business community. These included organic food companies, careers services, web design companies, management consultancies and research services. Whereas the people setting these up could be considered to be taking civil action at the time, most were not establishing civil groups, but for-profit businesses. Their ability to continue to take civil action within such companies depended on a host of factors, and could not be assumed.

The example I gave earlier of the pharmaceutical industry's U-turn on anti-retroviral AIDS drugs can not be fully understood without considering the role of the civil group Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) in approaching smaller pharmaceutical companies in the South to begin manufacturing generic copies of the patented drugs. The Indian company Cipla stunned the pharmaceutical industry when it agreed to dramatically cut the annual price to MSF of a year's supply of an AIDS drug cocktail to $350. Before this the lowest price offered by companies that held drug patents was around $1,000, while the same drug cocktail bought at 'market prices' in the West would cost $10,400. One month after Cipla's agreement Merck announced that it would immediately cut the price of its two anti-retroviral HIV/AIDS treatments for patients in developing countries. Soon after Bristol-Myers Squibb announced it would no longer try to stop generic-drug makers from selling low-cost versions of one of its HIV drugs in Africa (Bendell 2001d).

This action by MSF straddled the border between 'forcing change' and 'producing change' actions. Indeed, as the world of civil action became more complex and a variety of novel coalitions and funding relationships appeared, so they were difficult to classify. I continued to make an attempt at classification because the financing of one's civil action had an influence on the nature of one's civil action (as we will see in later chapters), and the confrontational/collaborative style reflected a difference in perspective about whether promoting our common good requires confrontation with, or enlightened use of, personal and organisational power. In the following section I summarise some of the evidence that suggested why companies might have been responding positively to any of these civil actions.

Why Would Companies Respond Positively?

In 1996, I co-wrote a paper, *If You Cant Beat 'em Join 'em* (Bendell and Warner 1996) which set out what managers collaborating with WWF-UK considered to be the business benefits of their collaboration. Over the coming years there was more research on the business benefits of engaging with stakeholders on social and environmental issues, some of it reported in mainstream journals

such as the *Harvard Business Review*. This evidence added weight to our original hypothesis that there was, in some cases, a positive correlation between various aspects of business performance and the company's *perceived* performance on issues of our common good (Weiser and Zadek 2000). The perceptions of civil groups were particularly important, given the way they helped shaped public and media opinion. Moreover, there was increasing evidence about the particular competencies of civil groups that could help business in addressing their performance on social and environmental issues, as well as how these efforts would be perceived (Waddell 2000). The benefits identified related to sales and marketing; employee recruitment, retention and motivation; operational regularity; product, service, process or brand innovation; risk management; and reputation management. The connection between these business benefits with improved share value was more disputed, given the complexity of interrelating factors affecting share value. I will briefly discuss some of the research evidence relating the business benefits.

The first area helping increase corporate interest in our common good related to sales and marketing. On the downside, consumer boycotts of companies resulting from campaigns on their ethical performance were worrisome for many companies. Companies such as Shell (during Brent Spar campaign in the mid-nineties) and B&Q (during tropical deforestation campaigns in the early nineties) had suffered falling sales due to consumer boycotts (Murphy and Bendell 1997b). On the upside there were well known examples, such as Ben & Jerrys and The Body Shop, who founded their whole brand on social and environmental issues, with incredible commercial benefits. The green consumer became a sought-after niche during the nineties. Studies repeatedly indicated that civil groups were trusted by the public to comment on social and environmental issues more than government, business or other organisations (Zadek 2001). Therefore, endorsement by civil groups of the social or environmental credentials of products and services was particularly helpful for corporates.[50] It was the credibility of claims made by civil groups that led to the corporate interest in the Soil Association, FSC, MSC, and FLO, described above, as well as Social Accountability International (SAI), which I investigate in Chapter 9, and the Better Banana Project (BBP), which I investigate in Chapter 10.

Consumer interest in social and environmental issues was reflected by the explosion of cause-related marketing initiatives. Many companies reported that this form of marketing had significantly boosted their sales, while in turn raising revenues for various social and environmental causes. For example, Diageo plc reported that between 1994 and 1998, 22 cause-related marketing projects had helped it to raise $600,000 for 'causes' while increasing the sales of related brands by 37 percent (BSR, 2000). Other studies suggested that consumers were drawn to companies associated with a particular issue. In 1999, the U.S.-based *Cone/Roper Cause-Related Trends Report* found nearly two-thirds of Americans, approximately 130 million consumers, said

they would be likely to switch brands or retailers to one associated with a good cause (Cone Inc. 1999). Many civil activists had mixed feelings about cause-related marketing, as sometimes the social and environmental attributes of the sponsoring company or its products conflicted with the mission of the civil group that was being supported. This was a major point of contention when I was at WWF-UK.

There was also evidence that perceptions of corporate responsibility influenced workforce recruitment, development, retention and motivation. Some ratings of the corporate social responsibility of firms were found to relate to ratings of the attractiveness of firms as employers (Turban and Greening 1996). The suggestion was that performance might provide a competitive advantage by attracting potential applicants. As Littlewood's Alan Roberts (1998) said of their ethical trading work "people actually want to come and work for us, it makes our employees feel good." One Shell employee told me that one of their biggest worries about the Brent Spar and Nigeria confrontations was that top graduates were not seeking employment with the oil company. While this was a particularly high-profile case, being a desirable employer was especially important in knowledge-based industries where young professionals sought creative, fun and increasingly meaningful workplaces (Kane 2001). In 2001, a survey for the Women's Executive Network showed that the most important factor attracting women executives to an employer was the organisation's ethical conduct (not remuneration!), while the investment bank UBS Warburg reported that 50% of all applicants asked about corporate citizenship during their interviews. That year a survey of 255 UK employees by the Industrial Society found that more than half claimed to have chosen the company they worked for because they "believe in what it does and what it stands for" (all cited in Bendell 2001e).

One study suggested that that 87% of European employees felt greater loyalty to 'socially-engaged' employers (Fleishman-Hillard 1999). This was found to be particularly important for staff working in retail companies. Using a quantitative approach, the retail group Sears analysed relationships between management quality, employee behaviour and their financial performance. Their figures suggested that improving 'employee attitudes' led to an improvement in customer satisfaction that led to a 0.5% improvement in revenue. This was equivalent to $65 million per year, which due to a variety of factors could increase the company's market capitalisation by nearly $80 million (Rucci et al. 1998). Corporations' sponsorships of, volunteering relations with, or policy partnerships with civil groups were heavily reported in most corporate in-house magazines I saw during my various visits to corporate headquarters, indicating that these were considered a good means of inspiring workers. In knowledge based industries, where creativity was king, the commitment of employees to their company was key to unlocking what some were calling emotional intelligence (Goleman 1996).

[50] An oft-cited example is the case of Greenpeace working with a then poorly performing company, Foron, to help them market 'Greenfreeze' fridges that did not use Ozone depleting CFCs. That relationship turned around

The actual process of implementing a social and environmental change process was often helped by working with civil groups. This was due to the expert knowledge of civil group staff on issues that the corporate world was not used to, as well as the fact they were non-commercial agencies who could then co-ordinate action between different companies, allowing them for example to drive changes in supply chains (Murphy and Bendell 1997b). In order to implement their policy commitment to only buy wood and wood products from well-managed (and eventually certified) forests, retail companies had to begin assessing their suppliers. This led to a much greater understanding of their supply chains, through better communication and greater cooperation, which was reported to lead to better quality and regularity of supply (Murphy and Bendell 1997b).[51]

Companies discovered that some of the social and environmental issues being raised by civil campaigns were actually things they could benefit from in tangible financial terms. The most obvious example of this was called 'eco-efficiency'. In the early nineties environmental campaigners were concerned about the lack of recycling, levels of pollution and energy wastefulness by many companies. Those companies that responded to these issues soon found that reducing energy consumption and minimising waste could actually save them money (Lovins et al. 2001). This illustrates how being open to ideas and arguments within society could drive business innovation, and not just for environmental issues (Senge 1994). Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1999) considered social issues to be a "beta site for business innovation." She argued that leading companies had discovered how working together with civil or government organisations to solve social problems gave them new insights and skills, which created new business opportunities. As one executive said - "when I engage with [civil groups] I see the future" (cited in Zadek 2001).

If these were the upsides, there was also the issue of managing downside risk. The developments with information technology and globalisation from below, mentioned above and in the last chapter, meant that there was heightened surveillance of corporate performance in most parts of the world (Bray 2000). Changing ideas about power and responsibility in a global economy also meant that people expected more transparency and responsibility from corporations (Rodgers 2000). This created a situation where risks to a corporation's reputation from social and environmental criticism became more complex, with these risks becoming more important to manage as reputation became more financially telling. For example, *Chief Executive Magazine* reported that 96% of CEOs believed corporate reputation was very important, and 65% dedicated more time to this subject in 1999 than they did five years previously (Bovet 1999). This was because a large percentage of most companies' total market value was comprised of intangible assets, such as reputation, brand, strategic positioning, alliances and knowledge, perhaps even accounting for one-quarter of the world's financial wealth in 1999 (Clifton and Maughan 1999).

Foron's fortunes and had knock-on effects for the whole refrigeration market (Hartman and Stafford 1997).

However, these assets were in the eye of the beholder, i.e. it was the investment analysts and those who influenced them who perceived this wealth.[52] Brand image had become so important that changes to it had significant effects on company profitability or value (Griffith and Jr 1997). What influenced a brand, and a corporate's reputation generally? The price, features, and quality of the goods and services that the corporation produced remained important, but increasingly so was the general respectability of a corporation.[53] The financial dangers of becoming disrespected were found to be very real by Jeff Frooman (1997), who analysed 27 studies that measured the stock market's reaction to incidences of socially irresponsible and illegal behaviour. These studies included product recalls, environmental lawsuits, anti-trust lawsuits, and regulatory fines as indicators of socially irresponsible or illegal behaviour. The analysis showed that companies that engaged in irresponsible activity that invoked regulatory or legal sanctions suffered very significant losses in shareholder wealth, which were never recovered (Frooman 1997).[54]

This brings us to the question of overall financial performance and stock price. Despite the evidence that ethical performance often aided core business functions, the evidence for the relationship between ethical performance and financial performance, or share value, was mixed. A study by Peter Prowse Associates in 1996 on the annual reports of 100 main European companies showed that companies, which applied codes of conduct performed better than the average on the stock exchange (cited in Sajhau 1997). In the USA, James Collins and Jerry Porras (1994) had argued that 'built-to-last' companies - companies with goals that extended beyond maximising profit - were actually more profitable than their peers. Samuel Graves and Sandra Waddock (1999) extended their analysis by making an assessment of both the ethical and financial performance of 'built-to-last' companies and comparing them with non built-to-lasts, finding that built-to-lasts outperformed on both counts. In reviewing the evidence John Weiser and Simon Zadek (2000, p. 115) argued that managers would be "mistaken to dismiss the potential benefits" arising from corporate engagement with environmental and social issues - and their champions in civil society. The consultancy SustainAbility (2001) reviewed similar research and found there was enough evidence in support of the idea that sustainable business practices could improve financial performance. However, the evidence, they noted, was still rather sketchy.

I found the evidence to be sketchy for very different reasons. First, researchers and commentators tended to generalise rules from individual examples. While there was some interesting evidence of positive correlations between doing well and doing good, this did not mean that for all companies,

---

[51] This may relate to the arguments about the importance of a shared set of values in business, as this reduces the need and cost of policing business relationships, whether between or within companies (Casson 1998).

[52] Ernst and Young found intangibles accounted for around 50% of companies' share price (Gonella 1998).

[53] The fact that 25% of all IBM news coverage in the US related to its citizenship activities in the community, in education and in the public interest (Litow 2000), illustrates the importance of these issues in shaping perceptions of corporate respectability and, therefore, reputation.

[54] John Weiser and Simon Zadek (2000) argued that a corporation's reputation affected its competitiveness in many domains, including a consumer's decision to purchase a product or service, a government's decision to

in all sectors, and for all aspects of our common good there would be a win-win relationship.[55] Second, most research reflected the dominant paradigm within management studies at the time that turning ideas into numbers via a survey, while choosing your own dependent and independent variables to the exclusion of other equally important factors, was somehow scientific and allowed you to use words such as "demonstrate," "show" and "prove," as opposed to "argue" or "believe" (see Chapter 4). This led to a false sense of certainty. It also masked how researchers were making questionable assumptions about what constituted or indicated ethical performance, which is my third concern with this research. For example, publication of a social or environmental report was nearly always seen as a good indicator by researchers, yet could be regarded a negative indicator, since it was often those companies with the most problematic operations and vulnerable brands who published a report (Doane 2002). It should be no surprise that oil companies often published the most sophisticated social and environmental reports. Nor a surprise that my local organic food co-operative, Infinity Foods, didn't produce a social report, while J. Sainsbury's and other supermarket giants did.

The problems with reductionism and positivism also arose with the comparison of the share values of ethically rated and non-rated companies. Many studies comparing the performance of socially responsible investment (SRI) funds, such as Friends Provident Stewardship, against standard share indices such as Dow Jones and FTSE found that the SRIs performed better during the nineties. Yet this may not have been because of the respectability or ethical performance of the companies in these funds. Pontus Cerin and Peter Dobers (2001, cited in Bendell 2002)[56] found that the Dow Jones Sustainability Group Index (DJSGI) outperformed the Dow Jones Global Index (DJGI) between 1993 and 1999, but that the market capitalisation value of corporations in the DJSGI was two and a half times larger than the corresponding average for the DJGI, and that there was a technology bias in the DJSGI. Further evidence that a technology bias of SRI indexed stocks was a (or the) significant variable came from the fact that the Canadian Jantsi social investment index (JSI) lost more than the standard index during the slump in technology stocks during 2000/1 (Bendell 2002).

There was another problem with most studies of ethical versus financial performance, as they downplayed the reflexive nature of the stock markets. George Soros (1998) argued that perfect knowledge of markets and companies was impossible and that investor behaviour is determined by fashion. Thus, he argued, what was important in financial terms was not so much what was valid in any objective sense but what was believed to be true. Therefore he was happy to invest in 'fertile fallacies' - stocks inflated by a common wisdom within the financial community that he didn't necessarily agree with. From this, if corporate ethical performance became a fashionable indicator

---

grant a license to operate and other regulatory permissions, and an individual's decision to seek employment with the firm.

[55] For example, a study in Canada found that only 5% of consumers were willing to pay for more fair-traded products (Utting 2000).

within the financial community of soundly managed companies, so it would be reflected in their buying and selling behaviour and therefore share prices, which would in turn reinforce this perception. A changing fashion can fashion change. Moreover, as the stock market was just that -- a market -- the fact that so many buyers were systematically turning their noses up at stocks which did not meet SRI criteria (already $2 trillion was invested in this way by 2001), so the *potential* demand for those stocks was falling, which might then lead to a real fall in demand and therefore a drop in share price, once some 'tipping point' was reached. (By 2002 it seemed that the stock-market might be lurching towards boom and bust cycles of fertile fallacies.)[57]

At the end of the nineties Simon Zadek (1999) considered evidence for a correlation between share value and ethics to be inconclusive, yet companies were beginning to act as if there was a correlation. Simon suggested that managers either knew their business better than the financial markets, or were possibly acting out of faith or with the wrong information. From my work with, and research of, managers I would suggest that two reasons account for the difference at the time. First, most people wanted to have an okay time when working - some wanted a great time. If there were things that could help them do their jobs, and make it more fun, and less stressful they would go for it. Given the complexity of the social phenomena involved in 'business,' direct evidence of a link between ethical and financial performance might be impossible to obtain, and if found, the link might prove to be transient and no longer valid. Instead, what people did know was how they felt, and whether those business benefits made their working lives easier, more fun and less stressful. Most of the pressure for companies to work on issues of our common good that were not required by law, came from civil action. I can attest that, at a personal level, managers did not like being the subject of a civil campaign against their company. I've seen a few frowns and sweaty brows.

This relates to the second reason why managers responded positively. They wanted to. Once managers awoke to social and environmental issues and accepted their company's responsibility in causing a problem, most wanted to do something about it. Therefore the arguments about a business case for acting on these issues merely helped give them arguments within the boardrooms to do what they wanted to do because of their values. Therefore, as former BP executive Chris Marsden, remarked, "if Greenpeace didn't exist we'd have to invent it." Civil group campaigning gave him the mandate within his company to get to work on social and environmental issues.
Another reason why corporations needed civil action was to police their competitors. It seems capitalism needs a countervailing power to prevent individual companies externalising all social and environmental costs for private gain and therefore setting up a downward spiral that would

---

[56] http://home.swipnet.se/peter_dobers/publikationer-eng.html

[57] At the time of writing it seemed that at some stage in the future there would be an SRI boom, which would create a situation where the utterances of leading commentators and institutes on corporate respectability would actually move share prices (a la Greenspan in the nineties), therefore causing problems regarding conflicts of interest. This boom could create an SRI bubble, which would burst when mainstream investors decided that non-SRI stocks were undervalued and move their capital.

destroy the social and environmental basis of economies. The state provided this function somewhat over the years, but in a global economy the relationship between business and government changed (Chapter 2). Some parts of the financial community were beginning to wake up to this fact, in the context of global warming. The following was published by a pension fund:

> *Institutional investors and pension funds in particular, aim to provide pensions and other benefits through long term investment. They can also be seen as 'universal investors' in that, due to their size, they commonly invest across the whole economy. If climate change threatens economic development, and especially if there are many or significant impacts, it will also therefore be likely to undermine the ability of pension funds and other institutional investors to fulfil their aims, so it is in their interests to see that risks associated with climate change are minimised. (Mansley and Dlugolecki 2001, p. 3).*

The same arguments could be made for effective and socially legitimate global regulation, in order to prevent corporations competing in ways which would undermine our common good and thereby remove the social legitimacy of global capitalism altogether (Bendell 2002). None of the research I have cited on the relationship between ethical and financial performance considered these issues, as they adopted a methodological individualism - believing you could understand a situation by focusing on individual participants in that situation (i.e. corporations). At the time it appeared as if a key pressure in the future would come from those institutional investors that spread their investments across the whole of the world economy.

So there seemed to be enough reason for managers to embrace the emerging discourse around "corporate citizenship" or "corporate social responsibility" and respond to the various civil campaigning tactics described in the previous section. It is clear that the perception of corporate contribution to our common good was the main driver for corporate response, not performance itself. Apart from narrow eco-efficiencies, the business case was founded on pleasing consumers, staff, investors and regulators, which came from corporate *respectability,* as opposed to responsibility. Therefore it was not surprising that some criticised corporate responses to civil campaigns as mere public relations exercises (Beder 2000; Klein 2000). As discussed in Chapter 4 there is a relationship between perception and reality, as the latter is conceived in our minds through the former. The issue is therefore the way perceptions of various segments of the public were shaped. Hence the ability of civil groups and actors to develop their own perceptions of acceptable performance versus 'actual' performance and then shape public and business perceptions of that was fundamental to whether the heightened concern for corporate respectability would then aid our common good. I return to this issue below, as well as throughout the thesis.

Civil Regulation and Our Common Good

Civil regulation is a concept I developed in 1997 with David Murphy as way of capturing the synergy between, and the importance of, the diverse relations between business and civil society, outlined in the typology presented above (Murphy and Bendell 1999; Murphy and Bendell 1997a). I then developed the concept further (Bendell 2000c), as did Newell (2001b) and Peter Utting

(2002). Simply, it is meant to describe the quasi-regulation of business by civil society. As I have shown above, civil groups were shaping expectations of corporate practice and then exerting very real pressures on individual corporations to make them change. As Deborah Spar (1998, p. 9) argued, once companies agreed to comply with a code of conduct:

> *They will be forced to – not by the sanction of the law but by the sanction of the market. Firms will cut off abusive suppliers or make them clean up because it is now in their financial interest to do so. The spotlight does not change the morality of US multinational managers. It changes their bottom-line interests.*[58]

As either business provocateurs or partners, civil groups were playing catalytic roles in changing corporate policy and practice. Traditionally, government had been regarded as the sole source of regulation. However, if we consider the classical concept of 'regulation', we can liberate it from the traditional view that also limited our perception of - and involvement in - politics and governance. From a re-working of Emmanuel Kant's (1964) ideas, a *regulatory framework* can be defined as a norm-creating and norm-enforcing system, which must exhibit the following five components:
an **agent**, or agents, which can make choices between alternative norms of behaviour
alternative **norms** of behaviour between which to choose
a **subject**, be it something or someone, upon which a chosen norm is imposed
a **resolution** regarding which of the alternative norms should apply to the subject
a **mechanism** for ensuring that the chosen norm is adhered to by the subject(s)

In terms of a national government and the legislature the *resolution* regarding which *norm* to choose is called 'legislation' and the preferred *norm* is called a 'law'. However, it is incorrect to assume a government to be the only *agent* that can consider different *norms* of behaviour and make *resolutions* about which should apply to different *subjects*, and then use a *mechanism* to ensure compliance.[59] In civil regulation the *agent* is civil society, where - given concerns with our common good - different *norms* of behaviour for corporations are debated. Civil groups then make *resolutions* about the standards that should be upheld by the *subjects* of the regulation, for example, the corporations. The regulatory framework is completed by a *mechanism* for ensuring compliance. In the previous section I illustrated how managers (and increasingly investors) believed that protecting, or enhancing, corporate respectability was vital to business success. This was because of 'consumer politics', by which I do not merely mean the political behaviour of high-

---

[58] I do not agree that it did not change the morality of TGC managers, as the 'spotlight' helps us all to ask questions of ourselves and an individual's 'morality' is an evolving phenomenon. In Chapter 5 I introduce the notion of 'power from within' and in subsequent chapters explore how managers' relations with civil groups sometimes unleashed this power.

[59] Moreover, it is questionable whether states were in charge of a regulatory framework at all. Kant argued that a chosen *norm*, or law, without a *mechanism* for enforcing it on a *subject* or subjects is mere wishful thinking on the part of an *agent*, and the system is therefore not a real regulatory framework. Yet this was the situation that confronted many states and inter-governmental organisations, who lacked the will and resources to implement their *resolutions*, or legislation, in ways that would really impinge on company value. Kant also pointed out that an *agent* who does not have a number of alternative *norms* to choose from in coming to a *resolution* is not a real *agent*, and the system is not a regulatory framework. Yet this was the situation for many governments who appeared to be locked into a process of deregulation and tax cuts in order to attract investment in a global market (Chapter 2).

street shoppers, but also that of corporate and governmental consumers, and the consumer preference for ethical financial products, which were mandating and sometimes compelling corporate action.[60]

This extension of Emmanuel Kant's work illustrates the kind of conceptualisation made possible by freeing oneself from a state-centric paradigm. For example, political scientist James Rosenau (1997, p. 145) argued that "any actors who resort to command mechanisms to make demands, frame goals, issue directives, and pursue policies" are partaking in "governance." Reflecting on the new international relations of business and civil society (and before becoming the Head of Business Group of Amnesty International UK) Chris Marsden (1999) suggested that there was "a new form of global governance evolving" that was made up of:

> *codes and accountability systems, which are becoming a kind of 'soft law'. It is being developed and enforced by increasingly sophisticated civil society activism, leadership by both socially responsible and responsive companies and thereby, increased public expectation.*

Notice the mention of 'soft law.' There were many different terms flying around to describe what some of us were calling civil regulation. Soft law was defined by the European Commission (2001) as rules other than laws, regulations and contracts, or as a set of instruments applied by professionals on their own initiative or in cooperation with others to be applied on a consensual basis, with no legal force. Others preferred terms such as 'strategic alliances' (Mytelka 1991), 'transnational advocacy networks' (Keck and Sikkink 1998), 'global public policy networks' (Reinicke and Deng 2000) or 'transnational private governance' (Gereffi et al. 2001). 'Self-regulation' was perhaps the most popular term during the nineties, particularly in relation to sustainable development. It was championed by some industry groups as a way of allowing flexibility in addressing environmental issues and by creating incentives for environmental innovations (WBCSD 1997).

Self-regulation, however, is a contradiction in terms. If we return to Emmanuel Kant for a moment, a *subject* of a *resolution* who is also the *agent* making that choice between *norms* is neither a *subject* nor an *agent*, and the system is not a *regulatory framework*. Or, more simply,

---

[60] It is widely understood that worker unrest with factory owners and other capitalists in most northern countries at the start of the 20th century led to the establishment and legal protection of trade unions and a democratic political force for workers. This was an incorporation of worker demands that served to head off the revolutions against capitalism that had occurred in other countries. Critics of capitalism argued for the development of a 'producer politics' where workers unite in order to control capitalists' access to labour. The social democracies that emerged from this period embodied the notion that capitalism worked best if there was a counter-balancing force to capitalists through strong government and trade unions: capitalists needed the workers while workers, it was argued, needed the capitalists. What I have described in this chapter could be seen as the emergence of consumer politics. Whereas producer politics gained its power through controlling access to labour, consumer politics gains its power through controlling access to customers. The examples provided here illustrate how civil groups were mobilising consumer politics to change the behaviour of corporations in a number of ways. Corporate boycotts and direct action protests are the confrontational outcomes of consumer politics, in contrast to the strikes and lock-outs of producer politics. Business-civil group partnerships are the co-operative tools of consumer politics, in contrast to the business-union deals of producer politics. The developments with SRI represented another form of consumer politics, operating through consumer preference for ethical financial products.

"international business cannot be expected to author their own regulation: this is the job of good governance." (UNRISD 1995, p. 19).[61] Despite this contradiction a culture of 'voluntarism' swept government circles during the eighties and nineties as they argued social and environmental regulations were inflexible and anti-competitive, while collaborative relations between business and government were more desirable. This could and should be questioned since "markets tend to become uncompetitive" and in a global economy corporations tend to monopolise market power so that "the policy implication... [is] to create a countervailing power so that... the market can be made to work more effectively again" (Marsden 1999). Therefore, unlike self-regulation, the concept of civil regulation upheld the notion of a countervailing force being required to moderate capitalism.

Quite apart from the theoretical and practical problems with the concepts and practice of self-regulation and voluntarism, there are problems of principle. David Korten (1995) noted that "corporations should obey the laws decided by the citizenry, not write those laws" (p. 308). From my discussion of our common good in the previous chapter, it is clear that it is right for every individual to shape what is possible for them. Democracy is the key concept here (Dahl 1961). In a democratically governed society, and remember I don't just mean a nation state, a community of people should have meaningful participation in decisions and processes that affect them and they should not be systematically adversely affected by another group of people, without being able to rectify the situation. This conception of democratic governance is based on an awareness of the collective pursuit of individual preferences - our common good.

If we believe in our common good, and therefore human rights and democracy, then organisations or persons that affect us and our community, especially when they affect the material foundations to our self-determination (such as our environment), must be able to be influenced by us. In other words, they must be made accountable. However, as argued in Chapter 2, economic globalisation had undermined the ability of national state systems for democratically governing the economy: corporations were not acceptably accountable to the citizens of a nation through the machinery of national government. Organisation theorist Henry Mintzberg (1989) therefore asked "how can we call our society democratic when many of its most powerful institutions are closed to governance from the outside and are run as oligarchies from within?" (p. 328). Although voluntary steps taken by corporations to deal with some of the social and environmental challenges that arose from, or just surrounded, their operations could be welcomed, from a democratic perspective they were not sufficient. What was required were new forms of democratic governance so that people could determine their own futures in a sustainable environment and safe society.

---

[61] What would be logical, however, is the regulation of some companies by other companies. Using examples such as the informal rulemaking by accountants and lawyers Gunther Teubner (1997) demonstrated how key actors in the private sector develop laws and law-like systems of rules. These were often large companies influencing a whole industry, so this could be called lead-industry regulation.

Given this perspective, I was unhappy with the term self-regulation. It embodied the undemocratic notion that the powerful could and should determine what was right for the rest of us. It was an autocratic concept. The concept of civil regulation emphasised the importance of people holding corporations accountable for their actions and changing their policies and operations. By giving forest communities, poor farmers, sweatshop workers and others a way of changing corporate behaviour, albeit through civil activist proxies in the West, my hope was that civil regulation might be providing a novel channel for the participatory democratic governance of the global economy. In other words, I hoped that what I was calling civil regulation would be *civil* - in support of our collective pursuit of individual preferences.

The democratic credentials of the 'civil regulators' were increasingly questioned after civil activism was discovered by the mainstream TV networks during the November 1999 WTO meeting in Seattle (Zadek 2001). *The Economist* magazine was very upset at the way ordinary people had helped bring the talks crashing to a close. They wrote:

> *Citizens groups are increasingly powerful at the corporate, national and international levels. How they have become so, and what this means, are questions that urgently need to be addressed. Are citizens groups, as many of their supporters claim, the first steps towards an international civil society (whatever that might be)? Or do they represent a dangerous shift of power to unelected and unaccountable special interest groups? (The Economist 1999, p. 22)*

Much of the criticism of the lack of accountability of civil groups was reactionary, and ignored the fact that many were membership organisations, were legally registered as companies, and some with charitable/nonprofit status, with the governmental scrutiny that this incurred. Moreover, their income relied on people believing that they were 'good causes' and their influence over corporations and intergovernmental bodies depended on their ability to mobilise people to take action, in the form of letter writing, boycotting, demonstrating, striking and so forth. While the reactionary critique was, therefore, misguided, the question of the accountability of civil groups is important to consider for progressive reasons.

The common denominator of civil action is that it is action for our common good. As this is the collective pursuit of individual preferences, so all those taking civil action should be conscious of how it might shape others' ability for self-determination. Unfortunately many professionals working within civil groups did not have an awareness of being part of a social movement for our common good, and were defensive about discussions of their accountability (some trade unions being exceptions). To many activists, 'accountability' had connotations of discipline coming from above not from below, while they prided themselves on breaking free of such concerns and being accountable only to their values. To many environmental activists, the idea of being accountable to a constituency seemed strange, because that constituency was "the environment." Yet as civil groups grew in size, so questions were rightly asked about their accountability to the sweatshop workers, artisanal fishworkers, forest dwellers and so on, on whose behalf they were meant to be working or advocating (Edwards 2000; Nelson 1997). This was increasingly important as big

foundations, corporations and governments gave more and more money to certain civil groups, therefore shaping their agendas and priorities, so as to threaten the creation of a "donor-led global civil society" that might be "subservient to the dictates of global capitalism" (Pinter 2001).

Some western civil groups were explicitly 'civil' by recognising the importance of working with Southern groups, rather than merely on behalf of them. As the director of the World Development Movement, Barry Coates (1998, pers com) explained to an audience of businesspeople:

> *[Civil groups] in the [global] North form alliances with those partners in the [global] South that are most heavily impacted by the practices of the companies concerned. Usually these groups in the South are unable to achieve the necessary changes through directly raising concerns with the suppliers or companies further up the supply chain. Northern [civil groups] respond to the needs of their partners in the South, supporting them in their campaigns.*

Unfortunately not all civil groups had such a rights-based approach to their work, and so I became interested in how civil regulation might actually be describing the quasi-regulation of business by certain, select, western civil groups, who had good access to rich donor agencies. In this sense, civil regulation might not be an agent of participatory democracy, but resemble the style of governance of fascist Italy under Mussolini, where the 'great and the good' were assembled to decide how the state would be run. I was reminded of Danny Burn's (Burns 1999, pers com) comment during my upgrade assessment, that "the problem I find is while participatory democracy might be participatory it's not often very democratic." So were we witnessing *The Economist's* 'dangerous shift of power' after all? To investigate, in asking the question "how was civil society directly influencing business in a global economy for our common good," we needed to ask "which part of civil society"? I develop this further in my discussion of how to analyse power, in Chapter 5.

A New Dawn or The Same Old Same?

When I was writing this the concept of civil regulation was not well known or widely used. Most people used the terms described above, such as soft-law or self-regulation. This helped create a clear divide between, on the one hand, those who wanted business to be left alone, and on the other, those who thought anything business might do which was not ordered by government regulation was mere public relations (PR). Their concerns were compounded by the activities of some major PR and reputation management consultancies, who were offering 'corporate responsibility solutions' in the same breath as saying they would help companies to outwit or co-opt their critics (Rowell 2001). Conferences on corporate responsibility became increasingly painful for me as I witnessed time and again the corporate victims of civil action being 'looked after' for tens of thousands of dollars by PR companies like Edelman or Burson-Marsteller, rather than the companies dealing directly with the issues and the people who had raised them. The PR companies were the defence contractors in this Cold War between the new superpowers of business and civil society. And like defence contractors, the more that threat of fighting loomed,

the more money they would make. An employee of one of these 'defence contractors' told me she was advising her clients to approach a well-known commentator and consultant on corporate responsibility to endorse the corporation's efforts, rather than working with civil groups and having a comprehensive stakeholder oversight of those efforts. "It would be easier that way," she said. Given the PR industry's terrible track-record in supporting our common good, and its apparent moral lobotomy, many civil activists believed that talk of corporate responsibility was a joke. A dangerous joke (Klein 2000).

Many civil activists argued against civil groups working with TGCs. Green Party activist and author Colin Hines argued that many activists had "not grasped" that there was "absolutely no way that sitting down with companies" was "compatible with achieving the environmental goals" they wanted (quoted in Rowell 2001). Some commentators thus saw collaborative relations between business and civil groups as illustrating of the co-optation of the interests they represented, in the way that social movements had been co-opted in the past. French sociologist Alaine Touraine (1983) considered that social movements go through similar cycles where they are co-opted once they gain some power. Others did not think that history repeated itself, and Claus Offe (1985) argued that because the process of (industrial) development is linear and produces unique societal effects so social movements are unique responses to changes in forms of production and trade. The obvious innovation that took root in the nineties was the Internet. Thomas Friedman (1999) argued that because it was no longer necessary to be a rich organisation (or person) to be able to communicate instantaneously with people around the world, so we were witnessing the democratisation of information and communication. Antonio Gramsci (1988) had argued that 'hegemonic power' is maintained as much by manufacturing consent through the media as it is by coercion or force. Absolute control over information is one of the keys to controlling thought and behaviour, as information influences and shapes cultural belief systems and legitimises political authority. Thus Carl Builder (Builder 1993, p. 155) concluded that "the losers of power in this [information technology driven] change are hierarchical organizational structures everywhere which have historically been erected and sustained on the control of limited information."

Did this mean we were entering a unique period of history, where social movements couldn't be so easily co-opted? There were some caveats to the notion of the democratisation of information and communication. By 2001 most people in the world had not received or made a phone call, let alone used the Internet. The kind of global consciousness I described in Chapter 2 was still somewhat limited to a (young) professional (jet)set. Moreover, there were trends in the evolution of the Internet that were distinctly not egalitarian. Service providers were ordered to track all email communications. China closed hundreds of Internet cafes and some countries started blocking emails.[62] Within the private sector there were signs that commercial considerations might interfere

[62] For example, colleagues in Costa Rica said that their emails to me were bouncing back because the state-owned internet service provider had black-listed my email address.

with the free flow of information, as search engines began pushing fee-paying websites to the top of their results and courts began clamping down on file sharing services such as Napster. Nevertheless, hugely increased and increasing numbers of people were able to exchange information and organise cheaply. This thesis is the product of the Internet - as I accessed references and chatted about ideas with interested colleagues. Perhaps, then, we were entering the age of transparency, where corporate respectability would depend on corporate responsibility? As a friend of mine, Jamie Roy, suggested: "Ads won't work anymore, the truth will."

The issue then, is what is 'truth'. With increasing transparency we might be able to agree what actual corporate performance is -- but what would be acceptable performance? And what is the truth about the corporate form, the market economy, the profit motive? Are these compatible with planetary sustainability and the collective flourishing of humankind? Which leads us to ask what is the truth about who we are and what makes us act in selfish or unselfish ways?

Some people believed that the age of transparency would lead to mutual consensual relations between different organisational forms in society. Thus Simon Zadek (2001) spoke of an evolution away from conflictual intersectoral relations and towards 'civil governance' where governments, business and civil groups would engage in dialogue about what was good to do, and work in partnership to deliver this. Somewhat similarly, Nicanor Perlas (2001) spoke of "threefolding," which described the "autonomous interaction of the three realms of society, through any of its three institutional powers or three key institutions, to advocate for or to achieve genuine or comprehensive sustainable development." He also believed we would see a move from confrontational to more collaborative and institutionalised inter-sectoral relations: from "de facto threefolding" to "advanced threefolding". Nicanor was more explicit than Simon in suggesting where these forms of institutionalised dialogue and multi-sectoral governance would lead, believing it would negate the dominant neo-liberal economic paradigm and replace it with "an economics of solidarity or associative economics and not an economics of competition" (ibid).

A meeting is an occasion when people gather together, some to say what they do not think, and others not to say what they really do.

Vladimir Voinovich

Nicanor and Simon were assuming, or hoping, that inter-sectoral relations could provide the space for reasoned dialogue to elucidate appropriate policies for all of society. There are some parallels here with Jurgen Habermas's (1987) belief that people could talk their way to a greater understanding of what is right or wrong to do, or a 'communicative rationality.' Yet Jurgen worried about the inability of people to find spaces where they could talk with each other free of self-interest, or the vested-interest of a group or an employer they had an attachment to. Therefore we might understand dialogue and collaboration as strategic. As a member of the civil group Living Earth, working with Shell in Nigeria, remarked "corporates like to be involved because they can change the debate: they are

now involved in sustainable development. It's a way of getting [civil groups] disarmed" (quoted in Shah 2000, p. 15). Civil society could be disarmed as money and power had often been found to alter the critical ability of civil groups (Cohen and Arato 1992), as well as to effect the ability of individual civil actors to think and act autonomously (O'Neill 1998). This might work at both conscious and sub-conscious levels. For example, another Living Earth employee said he didn't know how honest they "would ever be able to be" about the effectiveness of their work in the Niger Delta if they wanted "more money from Shell. That's the thing." (quoted in Shah 2000, p. 19). Others might not be so conscious of their co-optation, as Rupesh Shah noted:

> *Traditionally the [civil] sector has attracted fairly idealistic individuals who attach equal importance to their financial and employment security and the cause for which they are working... Does the creation of more financially safe careers affect the ideological determination of [civil groups]? (Shah 2000, p. 19).*

Moreover, as civil groups increasingly entered into collaborative relations with business, so they were employing more people from the business world to manage these relations. This tendency was illustrated by WWF-UK, who appointed an executive from the construction industry as director, and an executive from the timber trade as forest officer. Previously staff would have had an internal angst about whether working with industry was the best use of resources in securing progressive change, and would have naturally been more reflective about their practice. These staff had a skill set specifically tailored for working with business, and were accustomed to a higher salary, both factors that would encourage them to accept the type and pace of change being achieved by their activities. Not only were businesspeople entering the civil sector, but vice-versa and also into and out of the public sector. Thus there was the potential for new policy elites[63] to emerge, compounding the concern about democratic access to the new mechanisms of 'civil' governance. Might this lead to a global corporatist technocractic coalition masked by the rhetoric of a participatory society (Ottaway 2001)?

We might also question whether civil groups were legitimating a set of social and economic relations by participating in forms of 'partnership governance'. For example, upon analysing the role of civil groups in Central America during the eighties, Laura MacDonald (1994) suggested that "far from representing a homogenous sphere of free association... [their work] served to legitimate the status quo" (p. 281-292). Whether one feels to be in stasis or not depends on what changes one believes to be significant or necessary. Some argued there was a preponderance of evidence that we were not in stasis at all and civil action on corporate behaviour was delivering real benefits (Rondinelli and London 2001). The examples outlined at the start of this chapter seem to back up this claim. Or do they? A year and a half after the "We want a Contract" demonstration had led to a collective bargaining agreement in the Guatemalan factory concerned, Philips-Van Heusen closed the factory. A plausible explanation was their "desire to destroy the only active union" in the country's garment export sector (Anner 2000, p. 252). Or perhaps it was just because

[63] By which I mean powerful people within new 'epistemic communities' (Sutton 1999, see Chapter 8 and 9).

the products from that factory cost more due to the better working conditions? The pharmaceutical companies may have backed down over the South African court case, but they still managed to encourage their governments to push though new agreements on intellectual property at the WTO meeting later that year, which would compel Southern nations to uphold their patents (Bendell 2002). Efforts to promote forest certification had re-shaped the timber trade but done little to stop deforestation, while civil groups were now locked into continuing their work on certification, given their new skill set (Bass et al. 2001). Kelly Currah (2000, pers com) of World Vision, told me that "truly" he "did not think that as they are constructed at the moment [partnerships between business and civil groups] are actually making in-roads to changing corporate behavior."

Naomi Klein argued that even if civil groups were helping to change corporate practice, this would be limited only to those with high-profile brands, or suppliers to high-profile brands. Civil action was "powerless in the face of corporations that opt out of the branding game," she said (Klein 2000, p. 424):

> *So all over the world, children work in fields with toxic pesticides... producing goods for the export market... But their plight has never captured the world's imagination like that of the kids who make soccer balls with swooshes on them or clothing clothing for Barbie dolls, because their exploitation is unbranded, and therefore less identifiable, less visible, in our image-obsessed world. (ibid)*

The problem was that civil regulation seemed like it might only ever be patchy and archaic, driven by the fancies of western activists, media, consumers and investors. There were about 60,000 TGCs in the world, so how could civil regulation manage to influence all of them? Naomi believed it probably couldn't. "Chevron has been awarded contracts that Shell lost, Adidas has enjoyed a massive market comeback by imitating Nike's labor and marketing strategies, while sidestepping all the controversy," she suggested (Klein 2000, p. 422). Yet perhaps this ignored the knock-on effects of knocking-over one corporation? The fact that Shell had been hit so badly in the mid-nineties led BP to reassess its environmental policies, and withdraw from the Global Climate Coalition. Seeing how Nike suffered, Adidas appointed a former executive of the civil group 'Save the Children' to work on improving conditions for all their suppliers. Meanwhile, the developments in the financial community discussed above, suggested that civil action might be able to reshape the rules of the game for all corporations.

Some of the criticism of corporate responsibility initiatives came from people who were not so much concerned with what they achieved but what they stopped from being achieved. This was because some companies were pointing to self- or civil regulatory mechanisms as evidence that they did not need state regulation, assuming that the development of corporate responsibility added weight to the neo-liberal policy paradigm (Bendell 2001e). This led Naomi Klein to assert that "the challenges of a global labor market are too vast to be defined – or limited – by our interests as consumers" (Klein 2000, p. 428). There was a paradox emerging that as corporations addressed various social and environmental issues, so they would further consolidate their power within

society, which was a problem in itself (Bendell 2002). As a Living Earth member told Rupesh Shah:

> *My whole problem with the corporate sector is power and control and democracy... I think we are missing it as a democratic point of working with the corporate sector. It's not just about listening to your stakeholders - its about the nature of democratic control. It's great to be supporting democracy in Nigeria, what about democracy in Shell? (quoted in Shah 2000, p. 15).*

Tony Clarke (2000) of the International Forum on Globalisation (IFG) argued that the task was "not simply to make individual corporations more 'socially responsible' or more 'publicly accountable.'" Instead the task was "dismantling the systems of corporate rule that now dominate both humanity and the earth" (ibid, 2000). But herein lies a problem. Perhaps by talking about corporations not capitalism we were missing the forest for the trees. "Ads wont work, the truth will," Jamie had said. Could the 'truth' be that capitalism was institutionalisation of the worst parts of human nature - the selfish, the alienated, the egotistical? "I'll give you some power so long as I get more back from you soon." Forget economic theory, this is the basis of capitalism. Think why any bank, venture capitalist or employer would pay out money - to get more back in the end. Capitalism might, therefore, be antithetical to our common good. 'Reclaim the Streets' activist John Jordan stated:

> *You can't have ethical capitalism. There is a naïve belief that capital can somehow reign in its desire for profit and growth and suddenly its raison d'etre is to be humanitarian and sustainable, it's a non sequitur (quoted in Rowell 2001).*

If a patient is terminally ill, is there much point in patching their wounds? Some might ask this rhetorically, but I would answer yes, there is a point. Those wounds were people's lives: people living in forests being cut for timber, working in sweatshops being harassed, living in cities breathing polluted air. To change such things would represent revolutions in individual's lives, even if this didn't constitute the revolution that might cure the global patient.

We seemed to reify capitalism as one big thing. Yet there were different capitalisms. The hypercapitalism of the global economy was a completely different cookie to the up-close capitalism of earlier times. 'Capitalists' used to know the workers and communities affected by their investment. There was a face-to-face accountability, an unwritten code of acceptable conduct. This form of capitalism changed as owner, producer and consumer became ever more separated and what were essentially social relations became purely financial. I wondered whether the globalisation of communications and, potentially, consciousness might serve to re-embed capitalism within social relations and positive human values.

At this point someone might argue that although there were varying shades of capitalism, they were still based on exploitation. They would be right. Yet capitalism didn't come from outer space - it is an expression of part of what we are. Money has no mind – we do.. Competition, egotism, selfishness - these are all unfortunate aspects of what people can be. By the turn of the millennium

these aspects had become accepted and dominant. They were celebrated - and rarely ever challenged.

But there is another side to human nature - cooperation, solidarity and compassion. Civil society, if seen as the sphere of participation for our common good, is an expression of these aspects of our humanity. The question then is how different values and the organisations, behaviours and beliefs they spawn relate to each other. And so I asked myself during the years before writing this - *How had civil society been directly influencing business in a global economy for our common good?*

So Let's Go Bananas!

> *We were talking lots about these global games that big business are playing with the planet, but nothing got done. We decided to get away from the brain-aching stuff and focus on commodities. Wheat? Nah, that's boring. Soya? Hmm, pretty boring. Coffee? Well that's not so boring - but* bananas *- bananas seem more fun. And its certainly more politically charged than the other trades.*
>
> *Alistair Smith, BananaLink (1998)*

Alistair Smith was explaining why he started working on banana issues, during a talk at the 1998 Peoples' Summit in Birmingham, one of the many civil society summits organised in parallel to the G8 Summits - and the first that witnessed a global day of action (sorry Seattle, you weren't the first!). Bananas were the most popular fruit in the UK at the time, but just one of the many thousands of agricultural products cramming our shelves.[64] I had decided to focus on the banana trade in my exploration of the 'civilisation of globalisation' during a trip to Costa Rica in 1997 (Chapter 6). As so much work on corporate responsibility and business-civil society relations had been within a western context, mine included, I wanted to research somewhere in the South. And as I began my PhD, Alistair was beginning a campaign to try and get the banana company Del Monte to deal with some social and environmental concerns in Costa Rica (Chapter 7). I thought it was a chance to follow a campaign and see what would happen. I also thought as Costa Rica had been pursuing neo-liberal policies for years and was, therefore, being held up as a role model for the new neo-liberal governments in neighbouring countries, so any experience with civil action there might be of relevance to other countries in Central America. Moreover, the banana trade was one of the first to be subjected to the new governing architecture of the global economy - with the WTO working on resolving a dispute between the US and EU over the latter's system of tariffs and quotas. It seemed that the experience with bananas might be an indicator of the future of a multilateral trading regime. Given that Caribbean bananas, and therefore the thousands of self-employed farmers and the island economies were likely to suffer from any liberalisation of the

[64] Agriculture happened to be one of the most hazardous occupations in the world, alongside mining and construction, and the mortality rate, contrary to these other occupations, was rising (ILO 2000, p. 43). Several thousand new agrochemicals appeared every year, often without any prior assessment of their potential effects and the World Health Organisation (WHO) estimated that 3.5 to 5 million people were being poisoned by pesticides every year - 40, 000 fatally (ILO 2000, p. 44). Of all regions in the world, Latin American and Caribbean countries relied most heavily on agricultural exports, accounting for 23.8 % of total exports (ILO 2000, p. 26).

trade, bananas were becoming something of a political symbol. *The Guardian Review* (2000) concluded an article on the WTO with the words "mine's a Caribbean banana please." And so a few years of my life and four chapters of this thesis have been dedicated to investigating the trade.

In the following chapter I describe my methodological approach. I introduce something called 'civil action-research', which is a re-working of action-research philosophies and approaches in light of my interest in civil society. In Chapter 5 I unpack my research question, by considering what I mean by 'influence' and introducing various sociological approaches to the study of power and power relations. I outline three dimensions of power that I use to analyse relations between business and civil society, and introduce a fourth dimension of power, which allows us to consider how power can be created through relationships. In Chapter 6 I provide background information to the banana trade, as well as the various social and environmental concerns associated with its production in Costa Rica. In the four chapters that follow I analyse the experience with different types of civil action in influencing the banana trade - forcing change (Chapter 7), promoting change (Chapter 8) and facilitating change (Chapters 9 and 10). In Chapter 7 I chronicle the developments in the international banana campaign. In Chapter 8 I discuss the creation of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) in the UK, and how it became involved in banana issues in Costa Rica. In Chapter 9 I look at Social Accountability International (SAI) and consider how this organisation was influencing efforts at improving the banana industry. In Chapter 10 I present my analysis of the Rainforest Alliance's work with Chiquita Brands International. In Chapter 11 I pull together the various conclusions from each of the previous 4 chapters and discuss what they tell us about how civil society was directly influencing the banana trade. In the concluding Chapter 12, I reflect on the wider implications of these findings and what they tell us about some of the issues raised in this and the previous chapter. Moreover I reflect on some questions that arise from the various conceptual propositions I have made in this thesis (i.e. the meanings of civil society, our common good, civil power, fourth-dimensional power, civil action-research, and action-writing).

CHAPTER FOUR. The Truth is Out There - or Is It? Towards Civil Action-Research.

"The truth is out there", or so said the strap line for that popular science fiction TV show, *The X Files*, where FBI agents Mulder and Scully investigated cases that had never been solved. Agent Mulder used his personal experience, trusted his intuitive insight and was willing to extrapolate theory from a few examples when investigating the paranormal, whereas his partner Agent Scully rigorously adhered to natural scientific method and was always skeptical of Mulder's hypotheses. It's a wonder how such a popular show could have a methodological dispute as the main dynamic between its leading characters: love or hate, or both, are more commonly used as dramatic devices. So perhaps there is some hope for making a chapter on methodology interesting to read? I can't promise any extra-terrestrials, although some of the ideas might seem a bit alien.

Like Mulder and Scully I also believe that *truths* are "out there" to the extent that we should be looking at questions that arise from practice rather than theory alone. Much research focused on "in there" - in university libraries. As research topics became established they spawned a certain amount of literature so that new research was often shaped by a desire to deal with inconsistencies in the academic arguments, rather than tackle problems as they were occurring "out there." However, I also believe that truths are as much "in here" (I type while pointing to my head) as they are "out there." This is because the mind is active at every stage of knowing.

In this chapter I will further develop this notion of "cognitive relativism" that led to "post-modernism", something Patti Lather (1991) described aptly as "the code name for the crisis in confidence in Western conceptual systems" (p. 159). I do this to show how the philosophical foundations of "modern" social science can be challenged, and other approaches to research must be considered. In addition to criticising these so-called "positivist-empiricist" approaches, I point out that the insight of cognitive relativism is that *all* assumptions about how we might gain knowledge - or "epistemologies" - can be questioned. Therefore the justification of research is not implicit from a chosen method but could be derived from the motivation of the researcher. Therefore I turn to those schools of research that were explicit about motivation, focusing particularly on approaches called "action-research." I warn of the shortcomings associated with an emergent orthodoxy in this school, which focused on 'participatory inquiry'. Therefore, in summarising my methodology, I introduce the term '*civil action-research*' and argue that the activism of the research should not be suspended during its writing-up, and so suggest '*action-writing*' as an integral part of action-research.[65] In the final sections I discuss some of the specific

[65] As will describe later, an action-writing approach means that it is not sufficient merely to indicate to a reader that we know about something (by using citations, for example), but we should attempt to convey the essence of those concepts the reader may not know and which are essential to the argument. There is a pedagogic aspect to action-writing, which is why I spend time in the chapter deconstructing the epistemology that was held by many researchers who I wanted to reach.

issues that arose when investigating (and living) my research question, and reflect on the validity of my findings and the weaknesses of my research process.

No Safety in Numbers: Putting Positivism in its Place

Empiricist and positivist approaches dominated the social sciences during the 20th Century. These approaches assume that there is a real world "out there" made up of things we can identify and observe, operating according to natural causal laws, which govern their behaviour — laws which we can deduce by analysing the operation of the component parts. The belief is that if we can document enough correlations between events, we can come to understand causation and meaning. Although the approach is useful in some contexts, the dominance of this paradigm[66] in professional society (see Chapter 9) and social research was misplaced and had negative affects on social change, as I will explain.

The first problem with the positivist-empiricist approach in social research is its epistemological basis. How many times have you looked out of a train window at another train and thought for a second that your one was moving, when it was actually the other train moving in the opposite direction? At that moment your knowledge of the world was based on what you could observe, but nevertheless it was spurious. Was your perception altered because you wanted your train to be moving? Or perhaps because you were used to thinking (knowing) your train was in motion when you saw things pass by your window in the opposite direction? To twist a well-known phrase - some things have to be believed to be seen. 'Theory' is also a belief system, which shapes what we expect, or even what we want. Karl Popper (1969) argued that "the belief that we can start with pure observations alone, without anything in the nature of theory is absurd"(cited in Hollis 1994, p.35). Theory is therefore a means for selecting from a mass of sensory data and when we decide what the facts of observation are we may be deciding between rival theories (Quine, 1953, cited in Hollis 1994).

Information is just the signs and numbers, while knowledge involves their meaning. What we want is knowledge, but what we get is information.
Heinz Pagels

When one is investigating the social realm, these issues become even more pertinent. This is for two reasons. First, the researcher is a social animal and can't be objective about social phenomena, no matter how hard they might try. Second, *meanings* can't be observed and understood through correlating events. I discuss each of these reasons in turn.

Feminist theorists vigorously pointed out that social researchers are complicit in the constitution of their 'objects' of study, through their choice of questions, use of language, and processes of

[66] By paradigm I mean a world-view which provides the categories and concepts through and by which we construct and understand our the world. "Our paradigm tells us what is there, what isn't, what is to be taken seriously and what isn't, what are data and aren't, what is research and what isn't." (Stanley and Wise 1993, p.153-

analysis, so that the idea objectivity was unfounded (Alcoff and Potter 1993; Belenky et al. 1986; Harding 1987; Hartsock 1990). Liz Stanley and Sue Wise (1993) suggested that the idea it is preferable or even possible to be emotionally detached from one's research is "mere mythology" (p. 160). An illustration of this is a conversation I had with a friend over dinner. An environmental scientist, he had just finished a dissertation on environmental awareness in the Caribbean. He was talking about the need to promote economic growth in the region to protect their coral reefs, and I questioned why he might suppose this, since economic growth and coral reef conservation seemed to me to be potentially at odds. He said that he could statistically prove it was the case. He had conducted a study, which demonstrated that the wealthier the interviewee, the higher their environmental awareness and appreciation of the coral reef nearby. However, he had measured environmental awareness on a scale of low (utilitarian value) to high (aesthetic value). Therefore financially poor fishermen, who knew the value of the reef as their livelihoods depended on it, said 'it's the place where I fish' and scored lowly in his study. Wealthier people who were less likely to fish, and didn't depend on the reef, said things more like 'it's a beautiful place' and scored highly. Hence he produced 'statistically significant' results proving a correlation between wealth and environmental awareness. Yet for me the first type of answer was more environmentally aware, as it recognised the symbiosis of our lives with nature; so if I had been doing the study I would have come up with exactly the same 'statistically valid' results but which 'proved' the exact opposite.

The story indicates that 'objective results' are not possible, as the essentially subjective nature of people means they create and interpret 'results'. Moreover, we can "no longer see truth as something impersonal, which hangs luminously in the void, but as something attached very firmly to a person, and a time, and a place, and a system" (Reason and Rowan 1991, p. 136). The study of language also added to our understanding of the subjectivity of knowing (Gergen 1999), to the extent that Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury (2001) noted that "in scholarly circles it is difficult to suggest that the world exists outside our construction of it." Even beyond scholarly circles this view gained ground as people such as financier George Soros (1998) revealed that a similar philosophy had underpinned their success (as in the world of share trading and currency speculation the 'knowing' shapes the known).[67]

My aim over these last couple of pages has been to highlight the questionable assumptions behind positivist-empiricist approaches to understanding societies. In addition to questioning what can be known from such approaches, it can be argued that positivist-empiricist approaches actually close-off ways of knowing. They assume a methodological individualism whereby phenomena can be understood by studying the behaviours and qualities of individual entities. Consequently social scientists often reduce people and social phenomena into numerics (reductionism) in order to look

---

154). Philosophers of science have argued that there are no 'facts' which are 'paradigm-free' or independent of theory, because what we regard as fact differs according our world-view (Kuhn 1970).

[67] Some argued that positivist approaches to those being researched were also *morally* wrong: "treating people as objects - sex objects or research objects - is morally unjustifiable" (Stanley and Wise 1993, p. 168).

at causal relations (determinism). However, there is another line of thought, a methodological holism, which contends that phenomena can be better understood in terms of the behaviours and qualities of systems. This 'systems theory' was first proposed in the 1940's by the biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968), who was both reacting against reductionism and attempting to revive the unity of science. Rather than reducing an entity (e.g. the human body) to the properties of its parts or elements (e.g. organs or cells), systems theory focuses on the arrangement of and relations between the parts, which connect them into a whole. Simply put, we can be too busy looking down the microscope to see "the macroscope". In a book of that name the French molecular biologist, systems theorist and futurologist, Joël de Rosnay (1979), took a systems theory approach to analysing human society and by the end of the 20th Century there was an increasing quantity of work using this approach, often making more explicit references to non-Western ancient philosophies (Bateson 1972; Bohm 1980; Laszlo 1996).

Therefore action-researchers Peter Reason and John Rowan (1991) argued that:

> *Studying variables rather than persons or groups or communities is a flight from understanding in depth, a flight from knowing human phenomena as wholes. It means that the person, group community* as such *is never known (p. xiv).*

This critique was echoed in feminist research (Gherardi 1995; Mies 1993). Some suggested that society be better regarded as a sphere of infinitely complex webs of relationships, so that it is somewhat futile to focus on individual relations between independent and dependent variables. What this suggests is that the complexity of relations might be usefully understood by immersing oneself in the social situation being researched.

This links to another problem with the positivist-empiricist approach: phenomena such as emotions and values are difficult to understand using numerics and observation; moreover they are difficult to understand through language. Yet we know that emotions exist in society - it's an ontological given. And to know emotion you need to participate – it's an epistemological tenet. Emotions pre-exist language and can't be fully understood through language (let us not forget that animals think too!). As social psychologist John Shotter (1993) noted, there is a "kind of knowledge one has *only from within a social situation,* a group, or an institution..." (p. 7, his emphasis). The problem with reductionism and determinism is that they prevent the participation of the researcher in the sphere of study, and therefore only allow "separate" forms of knowing, requiring numerics and language (Belenky et al. 1986). Instead, to gain knowledge of the emotional complexity of human moments in society, it can help to *become* the researched.[68] Feminists described this as a distinct form of knowledge: "relational," "interactive" or "connected"

We are missing a whole class of investigators: those who interpret the raw universe in terms of meaning.
Annie Dillard

[68] We should note here that we are already "the researched" as "our world does not consist of separate things but of relationships which we co-author. We participate in our world, so that the 'reality' we experience is a co-creation" (Reason and Bradbury 2001). I discuss this further below, when describing my research methods.

(Belenky et al. 1986; Park 1993). To explore such knowledge, Liz Stanley and Sue Wise (1993) suggested that instead of sidelining "personhood" in the research process "it must be made full use of" (p. 161). Thus autobiography becomes a valid method (Griffiths 1995) and by living our lives a certain way we can conduct social or human inquiry, into our own living experiences (Marshall 1999). My own research was inspired by these insights, which I develop further below.[69]

A final critique of positivism-empiricism arises because the "legitimisation of knowledge-claims is intimately tied to networks of domination and exclusion" (Lennon and Whitford 1994, p. 1). Because traditional approaches aspire to objectivity and do not invite the researcher to consider inherent biases in their work, they do not allow that researcher to examine how they might be upholding structures of oppression (Lather 1993). They could be complicit in that oppression by privileging knowledge produced though processes that others could not - or would not - access. Nancy Hartsock (1990) and Sandra Harding (1987), amongst other feminist researchers, revealed how so-called objective research was often self-serving, politically motivated and, in turn, oppressive: something I suggest was the case in the study of civil society (Chapter 2) as well as in the auditing of labour standards (Chapter 9).

The End of Epistemological Certainty

It has not been my intention to suggest that positivist-empiricist approaches are 'wrong', merely that they are not always right and can only tell us so much, and not as much as those who use them often claim. These approaches are not alone in having their epistemological basis undermined. In *The Philosophy of Social Science: an Introduction*, Martin Hollis (1994) explained how researchers and philosophers through the ages made different assumptions of how and what we can know about the world and ourselves. He described approaches as diverse as 'naturalism' (e.g. Karl Marx, who focused on 'systems'), 'game theory' (e.g. John Nash, who focused on 'agents'), and hermeneutics (e.g. Emile Durkheim, who focused on 'games'). His book progressed by presenting the basis of each approach and then pointing to their failings.[70] The history of ideas teaches us that nothing is true, only fashionable. Though, in saying this I might be a fashion-victim of deconstructive postmodernism, but that only supports the argument, in circular fashion![71]

This analysis led me to accept the concept of *cognitive relativism.* This is the theory that there are no facts prior to interpretation and that claims to knowledge of the world are always relative to

---

[69] Some anthropologists also questioned the alienated relationship they were expected to have with those they researched, and the privileged position they assumed in that relationship, as western intellectuals (Clifford and Marcus 1986; McGrane 1989). Some went further to explore what this growing sense of self-awareness meant for anthropological study (Okely and Callaway 1992).

[70] For example, hermeneutic attempts at understanding Other Minds and Other Cultures can only offer subjective and inter-subjective data, so there can be no absolute knowledge of minds or cultures.

[71] The growing fashion for participatory approaches within the field of action-research and the related efforts to develop participatory epistemologies (Reason and Bradbury 2001) need to be seen in this context (see below).

some set of beliefs held at a particular time and place.[72] Nothing can be known without a knower. The mind is always active in deciding what counts as knowledge, at every stage of knowing or the research process (Belenky et al. 1986, p.137). There is no epistemological certainty.

The insights of cognitive relativism supported a post-modern revolution in thinking, where the relationship between the knower and the known was acknowledged. Patti Lather (1991) argued that, for an increasing number of researchers, this led to "a shift away from a view of knowledge as disinterested and toward a conceptualization of knowledge as constructed, contested, incessantly perspectival and polyphonic" (p. xx).

This argument was not dominant, indeed it was often ignored, while others critiqued cognitive relativism. For example it was said that cognitive relativism negates any one approach to understanding or explaining the world and its people while being itself just such a single theory (Hollis 1994). In other words, you can't doubt everything as that makes you certain of doubt. To me this argument proves the ability of language to tie us in knots by limiting our consciousness. For example, I could defend cognitive relativism with the following sentence: 'Every certainty can be doubted, including this.'[73] The important aspect of cognitive relativism is that knowledge is contextual and contestable, and we need to reflect on our assumptions and explore our doubts.[74]

God have mercy on the man who doubts what he's sure of. Bruce Springsteen, Brilliant Disguise.

Resistance to the cognitive relativist perspective comes from a concern that "it threatens every attempt to justify one interpretation over another" (Hollis 1994, p. 241) and therefore signals the end of a coherent social science, as "the only 'rule' that survives is 'anything goes'" (Feyerabend, 1975, quoted in Hollis 1994, p. 296). Others wondered that if cognitive relativism implied the end of

---

[72] Two aspects of cognitive relativism have been defined - conceptual and perceptual. Conceptual relativism is based on the understanding that cultures vary hugely in their schemes for conceptualising and ordering their experience, so "one scheme... regards thunderstorms as acts of divine displeasure, whereas another works with subatomic particles and a theory of kinetic energy" (Hollis 1994, p. 237). Perceptual relativism is based on the idea that we impose order rather than discover it and consequently perception cannot bring us objective news about the world. "The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organised by our minds" (Whorf 1956, p. 213). I should note here that there is a difference between a relativist ontology, which I don't support, and a relativist epistemology, which I do have. There is something real but we can only know through various socially constructed means of knowing.

[73] Western academic thought did not like paradoxical statements. For example, philosophers spent time trying to work around the 'paradox of the liar': Epimenides, the Cretan, said that "Cretans always lie" which by saying it brought its truth into question (Soros 1998). Using the illustration of a sign reading "please ignore this sign," Gregory Bateson suggested that paradox is inherent in life, and that we should accept, value and explore paradox, rather than seeking certainty in binary 'either-or' thinking (cited in Shah 2001b). It is a concept I return to in the conclusion.

[74] A second criticism of cognitive relativism is that "variety... is no disproof of the idea that there is a single truth to seek about the underlying order of things." (Hollis 1994, p. 238). However, conceptual relativism is not concerned with 'truth'. The argument is that theory and method are culturally generated, and so we do not know whether one is more accurate than another in determining or describing 'reality'. Cognitive relativism is agnostic on morals and truth. It is one of the variants of 'ethical relativism' that are atheistic on morals and truth, which many action-researchers have chosen to reject, as I will explain below.

knowledge and the triumph of opinion, then what's the point of research? After I presented my research at a seminar of the Aspen Institute (Annex II), an economist said to me afterwards 'what I don't understand is why if researchers like you believe that this is all relative, you don't just give up researching?' Yet, with Patti Lather (1991), and other feminist researchers drawing on post-modernism, I believe cognitive relativism does not imply the death of research but gives birth to new forms of life-enhancing research. If we move beyond the question of 'what is knowledge?' to the question 'why do we want knowledge?' we can redefine what makes research valid, reliable and justifiable, and uncover an exciting future.[75]

Motive Matters

Motive is key in shaping every moment of the research process, from research question, to the type of method, through to analysis, write up and dissemination. My argument is that as all knowledge is socially constructed then the basis for justifying an interpretation can be found within the motivation of the person producing that knowledge. It is our motivation as a researcher that can provide a justification when we claim 'to know' something, and the impact of our research on our goal which determines its value. What is the nature of this motivation that makes our work justifiable? In answering this it is important to discuss those schools of research that considered "why" – the pragmatists, feminists, critical theorists and action-researchers. In this section I aim to show that it is possible (and necessary) to build a justifiable research project from the rubble of post-modern deconstruction, with motivation at the foundation.

The important thing is not to understand the world but to change it.
Karl Marx

One group of researchers who started thinking about why we want knowledge were the North American pragmatist philosophers. In the 18th Century William James asked rather bluntly "what is the point of theorising? What difference does it make?" (quoted in Popkin and Stroll 1993, p. 328). Consequently he went on to argue that instead of being concerned with notions of truth we need to ask what function a theory has and what difference it would make if it were true - truth is what truth does. Some clarification is called for - specifically one might ask 'utility for whom?' "Are we concerned with what works for us as individuals, for our society, for humanity, or what?" (Popkin and Stroll 1993, p. 335). For something to have utility there must be a goal in mind. The pragmatist approach only takes us so far, identifying motivation as significant while not suggesting what might constitute a valuable motivation.

[75] Some of the resistance to cognitive relativism seems to arise from people's concerns with how ethical relativism rejects the notion that one moral standing is any better or worse than another. Ironically, this concern arises from the values of researchers, yet they restrict the logical extension of cognitive relativism – that motivation matters, that values are important in the justifiability of any piece of research.

Another group of researchers were known for their explicit motivation, this being a "commitment to political change" for the emancipation of women (Kemp and Squires 1997, p. 145). There were a variety of different feminisms, depending on how they defined the problem, and this meant that there was a diversity of methodological approaches by people describing themselves as feminist (Coleman 2001). At various points in this chapter I have cited those feminist theorists who made similar arguments to my own. However, it was not until I neared completion of this work that I realised my findings paralleled theirs: despite my supervisor Tom's suggestions that I look into it. This is because at the time the word "feminist" meant to me something about women researchers researching women's issues, as it still does to many of my colleagues. In this way feminist research defined itself into a ghetto, so that other critical and progressive research was often ignorant of feminist theory, or downplayed its identity as such (Maguire 2000). It is in keeping with feminist arguments that I have not retrospectively cleaned-up my methodology to suggest that it developed out of a knowledge of feminist literature.

At the outset of my research I did know of one group of researchers who had an equally explicit motivation – to free the world from capitalist exploitation. Called the Frankfurt School of "critical theory" they drew their inspiration from Karl Marx (Adorno 2000). The growing critique of structuralist interpretations of society meant that the Marxist undercurrent to critical theory waned and new concepts about the power of language and the importance of communication in achieving social understanding rose to prominence (Habermas 1987). While this post-modern deconstruction of the emancipatory project of critical theory might be regrettable, that project could be questioned for its privileging of researchers and their theories. This is because researchers would determine what they considered to be the real interests of people from (Marxist) theory, rather than engaging with people to uncover together the nature of their needs and wants. There was a tendency toward alienated and undemocratic relations between researcher and researched, leading to researchers talking amongst themselves about their theories, rather than changing things in society.

One sociologist working with the (financially) poor in Latin America was well-known for taking a different approach, focusing his energies on enabling people to become aware of their situation so they could decide how to change it. Paulo Freire (1974) researched the best ways of conducting such 'consciencisation' of the poor, by attempting it himself. Research was important for informing emancipatory action, and emancipatory action was the best method for such research. The motivation was explicit, to promote people's self-determination, which is also the basis of our common good, as I described in Chapter 2. Peter Reason and John Rowan (1991) shared the same motivation, arguing that the aim of their research was to produce "the kind of active knowing (that)... is helpful to the flourishing of people and to the politics of self-determination" (ibid p. 489). Research where motivation is explicit in this way was often called *action-research.* In their book of that title, Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury (2001) defined action-research to be:

> *...concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview... It seeks to bring together action and*

reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities.

For an action-researcher, all knowledge is for action, and action is for the knowledge of all. Moreover, to know, we must act - action *is* knowing.

In addition to the goal of self-determination, Peter and Hilary pointed to people's inter-relations and therefore used the concept of participatory societies and ways of being. It is important to note that they did not define what a participatory society might look like or what systems of governance would or would not be appropriate.

Action-researchers also needed to consider more closely their theories about social change: such theories should be a starting point for anyone interested in working for our common good. Many claimed to support structuration theory, which described a mutual relationship between social structure and social agent (Giddens 1984). I recognise social structure in terms of i) similarities amongst individuals, which influence their thought and action and ii) systems of social organisation created and re-created by individuals, which also influence their thought and action.[76] It is the second aspect of social structure that can be, perhaps constantly, reshaped by individuals and groups, which then influences the thought and action of others. Much action-research seemed to ignore the structural side of structuration theory as this was not easily investigated by collaborative research, which was poised to become the orthodox form of action-research, as I will now explain.

Participation Problems

By 2001 there was a new orthodoxy emerging in action-research, which was grounded in an ontology of participation -- the world is a realm of participating entities -- and an epistemology of participation -- to 'know' something you must participate in it. This orthodoxy was illustrated by the collection edited by Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury (2001), which defined action-research in its title as "participative inquiry and practice."

While it was both important to stress the interconnectedness of natural and social phenomena by espousing an ontology of participation, this said little about the type of participation which we value. Participation means partaking in an activity, which can include conflict and competition - we can participate in a fight. I believe the kind of participation that is worth valuing is participation that enables our common good, as set out in Chapter 2. Therefore an ontology of

[76] Contrary to the belief that relativism and structuralism are irreconcilable, from my understanding of cognitive relativism, I believe that although we can not 'know' objective social facts (because of the social construction of knowledge), this does not mean there is not an objective reality of processes which can be understood, metaphorically, as 'structures'.

participation, in itself, does not necessarily determine a value basis or ethical motive for research. What it does is indicate the importance and validity of experiential knowing - an epistemology of participation. Yet, as I say, we can participate in a fight. Therefore, to gain knowledge of a particular fight, for example a political struggle, you could participate in it.

However, the emergent orthodoxy used a narrower conception of participation, equating it with collaboration, so that action-research was defined as "a participatory, democratic process" (Reason and Bradbury 2001). This was not properly supported by their ontology or epistemology, which merely noted the existence of participation, not the nature of that participation. They used the word 'participation' descriptively to denote *complex interaction* in the context of ontology and epistemology, but used it normatively to suggest *collaborative complex interaction* in the context of a researcher's methods.[77]

By focusing on ontology and epistemology as the foundation for the validity of action-research one side-steps a more overt exploration of motives. In this sense the new orthodoxy focused on participatory means, *our method*, instead of participatory ends, *our motive*. Seeking epistemological certainty and commonality is a red herring, as there will always be plural ways of knowing, and each way can be valid if the knower is acting out of motives that we value and with an awareness of the limitations to their method.

My arguments here are paralleled by some feminist writings. For example, some argued that the intention of the researcher is more important than specific epistemological or ontological beliefs (Harding 1987; Kemp and Squires 1997). Therefore, the use of certain methods does not make research feminist but "the questions that we have asked, the way we locate ourselves within our questions, and the purpose of our work" (Kelly 1988, p. 6). This was also implicit from an acknowledgement of multifarious forms of knowing (Belenky et al. 1986; Lather 1993). Similarly, Yvonna Lincoln (1997, p. 10) suggested "we set aside our wedded bliss to paradigms,... quit debating about method [and] move to an action arena, guided... by the ethic of social justice."

Some feminists argued it would be counterproductive to ever be uncritical about a method, as this would establish new hierarchies and undermine the self-consciousness required for social change (Mies 1993). Therefore we should consider the possible regressive implications of a trend toward a

---

[77] Perhaps some researchers did believe that the world was essentially collaborative, rather than merely a space of complex interactions. This view could draw inspiration from certain Eastern philosophies and spiritual practices, notably found in the teachings of Gotamma Buddha. The belief here is that the world is already perfect and that we cause problems when we clutter our minds with unnecessary things, or when we are not aware of ourselves as part of a perfect universe. However, there are arguments against such a world-view. For example, the cluttering of our minds is as much a phenomenon of the world as an uncluttered mind. There are modes of relating, or types of participation, that we value more than others - there are things in this world that we value more than others. Therefore the question is 'what is it we value?' and is something I began exploring in Chapter 2 with a discussion of different spiritual, ecocentric and secular traditions of thought and will probably continue exploring forever. At the time I believed it wrong to assume ours is a collaborative reality, as it is something we strive for.

new epistemological certainty in action-research: specifically, how insisting on collaborative means for participatory ends might actually *undermine* social change, as I now explore.

If a researcher believes that individual agents in powerful groups can be helped to find new discourses and resources and thereby change systems, they could use collaborative methods with groups who are seen to be inhibiting a participatory society in some way. For example, in her analysis of an environmental business initiative Hilary Bradbury (2001) reasoned that by establishing dialogue with industry leaders "emergent change at the micro-level could shift the macro-dynamics of a system toward more sustainable practices." This was an acceptable working hypothesis, given a belief in structuration theory.[78] However, it was still just a working hypothesis, and might not be proven in every case; therefore problems might arise if the collaborative method began to dictate the research process. Hilary herself recognised a potential problem when she pondered the problem of collaborative research with a major corporation:

> *how do I work participatively [sic – collaboratively] with people whose role and self definition is based on unilateral power backed by threat of physical violence? - i.e., completely contrary to the (idealistic) notions of unconstrained dialogue that I think grow out of a participative mode of being. (Bradbury 2001, pers com.)*

She told me a way forward might be to "seek out the islands of civility" and work with those who "can see the value of valuing others, or working with others for a common purpose" (ibid). We can hope this may be so, but does it show how the primacy of method can influence the researcher so that finding common purpose with the collaborators becomes the goal, rather than wider concerns about our common good? Might this as easily lead the researcher to help the powerful find policy narratives that enable and explain minor changes and thus entrench unsustainable and non-participatory organisational forms in society?[79] This suggests that there is a danger in fixing the method first and only then hypothesising a process of social change in order to justify the method. It's back-to-front action-research.[80]

---

[78] A social change hypothesis would need to address how enlightened managers might be able to achieve systemic changes such as changes in the global regulatory framework, the imperatives of the stock market, patterns of consumption and production and a change in the hydro-carbon civilisation generally. Even so, the method not the emancipatory motive would be driving this intellectual process.

[79] A policy narrative is a 'story', having a beginning, middle and end, outlining a specific course of events which acquires the status of conventional wisdom within an arena of policy making. (The 'tragedy of the commons' is a policy narrative, for example, which outlines the series of events leading from overgrazing of common land by pastoralists to eventual desertification.) Policy narratives are distinct from discourses, which refer to a wider set of values and a way of thinking. A narrative can be part of a discourse if it describes a specific 'story' which is in line with the broader set of values and priorities of a discourse - a discussion of discourse follows at the end of the chapter (Sutton 1999).

[80] There appeared to be an increasing use of the concept of communicative action (open uninhibited dialogue) leading to communicative rationality (a sensible understanding of problems and solutions) in social and environmental policy-making. However, the concept of communicative action developed by critical theorists was one of dialogue uninfluenced by commercial considerations. It was difficult to claim this was possible with managers of corporations looking at issues that had a commercial (or professional) implication. Instead, there were commercial constraints on possibility, which would frame managers' discussions of these issues, and shape the emergent discourse, as I argue in subsequent chapters. Therefore research that claims a theoretical context of communicative action/rationality requires further questioning.

By focusing on method rather than motive the new orthodoxy allowed for the 'industrialisation' of participation – leading to a new Fordist production line of participatory research projects. John Gaventa and Andrea Cornwall (2001) raised the issue:

> *[T]he uses and understandings of participatory research have broadened considerably. Rather than being seen as an instrument only of the powerless, the language and methods of participatory research are being adopted by large and powerful institutions. The new legitimacy and acceptance of participatory research raises critical questions. What aspects of participatory practice are institutions like national governments and the World Bank taking up? Does this new incorporation represent co-optation, or does it represent new spaces for larger and more effective action?*

If the method is all that matters then the results from highly-paid consultants who have little interest in spending more time than necessary, struggling with the contradictions, or exploring the silences, could be treated in the same way as results from someone involved for ethical reasons. The importance of this is illustrated by my discussion of social auditing in Chapter 9. In addition, consultants might not question whether it was right for poor countries to pay exorbitant fees for foreign experts, thereby increasing their debt obligations, or whether the limited budgets for social responsibility work were of companies best spent on consultancy fees (see Chapter 9). These questions about the socio-economic context of a research project are key, and would be easily overlooked by a focus on method not motive.

The fact that the new orthodoxy focused on method not motive meant that non-collaborative research was not recognised as action-research:

> *it is for people themselves, in their own right, to enter into agreements with each other to discover and create knowledge, and* this is the only principle on which research and inquiry has a right to exist *(Reason and Bradbury 2001 emphasis added).*

This position threatened to close off all work that might focus on systems, not agents, or work aimed at 'naming the enemy'[81] i.e. identifying the systems and agents that inhibit our common good. Therefore this orthodoxy did not operationalise the two sides to structuration theory and thus only had a partially formed view of social change. History seems to suggest that change comes through struggle by the powerless as much as though the enlightenment of the powerful. Facilitating the enlightenment of the powerful and the powerless is essential work, but it's not everything. Diagnoses of systemic problems and confrontation with the powerful in those systems remains important.

The collaborative dictum is not helpful when you are studying a situation where people are struggling against each other. Rupesh Shah (2001a, pers com) noted that "when everything is fine and dandy then people may well want to come to you and ask for a bit of reflection" but its difficult when you're wanting to study a zone typified by contention, defensiveness and struggle, where collaboration with one would restrict access to the other. In my research I was interested in the inter-relations between two different groups or sectors. Given the level of mistrust and conflict

between these groups, I couldn't be seen to be allied to one or the other if I wanted access to both. Collaboration was impossible, yet whole-hearted participation in moving things forward was my goal. For example, I established sites of participation through multi-stakeholder seminars (Annex II), but most dialogue between the sectors was strategic – there was little communicative action (see Chapter 8).

By adhering to a collaborative dictum the new orthodoxy ignored its debt to structuralist theories and methods. In much action-research writing, references were made to insights on capitalism and patriarchy. These insights came from decades of non-collaborative, reductionist and determinist research work, and a tendency for grand theorising. In an earlier text Peter Reason and John Rowan (1991) acknowledged their debts to critical theory and Marxist social theory:

> *the impact of the critical philosophy can be felt at a number of points, and historical-materialist language and thinking occur at a number of points. Much of the material in this book,* whether the people concerned know it or not, *comes under Habermas' (1971) category of 'emancipatory interest', which seeks to free people not only from others, but also from their domination by forces which they themselves do not understand.* [emphasis added] *(p. xvii)*

If people are subjected to "domination by forces which they themselves do not understand" (ibid, p. xvii), as Marxist analyses of economics and feminist analyses of patriarchy suggest, then the questions that emerge from collaborative inquiry might not be the most important ones for creating a more participatory society. For example, Dorothy Smith (1987) argued that women's daily experience can generate the questions but not all the answers given that the determinants of their experience are found outside that experience, in the political, economic and social order. There is a challenge to combine knowledges arising from different positions in society.

My point here is that because there are a number of problems with collaborative methods of research, they cannot be the sole basis of action-research. There is a suite of methods researchers can use to effect change in society toward a more participatory democratic form. It is the motivation of the researcher to create a better society, rather than their ontological assumption that 'participation' exists, or the epistemological view that recording participation is valuable knowledge, or the methodological dictum that only collaborative techniques are justified, which should define the essence of action-research.

My arguments here are paralleled by some feminist critiques. For her part, Patti Lather (1997) expressed concern that her own categorisation of types of validity for research (Lather 1993) might police research as much as pluralise it. Liz Stanley and Sue Wise (1983) suggested many feminist researchers suffered a hangover from the positivist research paradigm (which they identified as symptomatic of a patriarchal paradigm of life). They described how feminist researchers were developing their own form of 'normal science' so that sanctions on their work were "coming from

---

[81] This was the title of a book about the growing movement against global capitalism (Starr 2000).

sisters too" (Stanley and Wise 1993, p. 155). Therefore, they felt feminists needed to be *Breaking Out Again* from a patriarchal research paradigm. Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury's (2001) argument that only their way of researching "has a right to exist" seems somewhat patriarchal. Giving primacy to a "method" - one's set of logical steps and practices - rather than motive, one's values and feelings - is also patriarchal in its separation of self and other, feelings and practice. This "downgrades the importance of the personal and of experience" (Stanley and Wise 1993, p.150).

It seems we need to continue breaking out of our disciplines. Michel Foucault (1979) pointed out that academic disciplines did indeed discipline us into certain ways of thinking. An eclectic use of theory from different disciplines, a desire to make this work accessible and relevant beyond academia and a criticism of new research orthodoxies, means this work could be described as "anti-diciplinary." In the latter half of this chapter I summarise this approach, giving it the label of "civil action-research." I do not intend to suggest this as a new "discipline", but a freedom from discipline and a focus on motive.

Toward Civil Action-Research

The basis of my work was my motivation – through my research I attempted to participate for our common good. In Chapter 2 I defined civil society as participation for our common good. Thus I was attempting to be part of civil society and exert what I came to term *civil power* (see Chapter 5). As I reflected on what I was doing, I was able to define some of the key foundations of this approach, which I'll term *civil action-research*. In this section I will briefly explain the important premises of this type of work, by explaining *how* we should try to know, and *why* we should try to know.

Every man's memory is his private literature.
Aldous Huxley

The Knowing of Activity

One foundation of civil action-research is the value of extended forms of knowing. In academic inquiry, as in society, we were disciplined into only certain ways of knowing the world (Foucault 1979). This disciplining of research both reduced the complexity and ignored the emotional content of phenomena in society. Instead, there is a need for the researcher to go 'upstream' and explore where the people being researched are coming from emotionally. As discussed earlier, where possible, the best means of appreciating the complexity and emotional aspects of a situation is to become involved. This is especially true for knowing civil society. Because the civil actions that constitute civil society result from very personal and emotional compulsions, we see that a researcher can't hope to

Do you know the difference between education and experience? Education is when you read the fine print. Experience is what you get when you don't.
Pete Seeger

understand civil society, can't hope to really know it in any meaningful sense, unless they participate in it. To know civil action you must take it; to know civil society you must form it. This does not mean that when researching civil society we must undertake collaborative inquiry, but that our research must be first-and-foremost about our participation for our common good. Our research must itself be a civil action - it must be *civil action-research*. Thus experiential knowledge, or *the knowing of activity,* was fundamental to my research.

Another aspect of extended forms of knowing relates to the origin or effect of a situation, idea or theory. We cannot fully understand these in isolation, as conceptual models on paper, but we need to appreciate their origins and their effects. There is a need to go 'upstream' again and explore the motivations and backgrounds of people advancing certain theories, as Michel Foucault (1977; 1980) sought to do. There is also a need to go 'downstream' and experience what an idea or theory means in practice. There were many theories in use at the start of millennium that seemed resistant to evidence showing that they were untenable, such as the neo-liberalisation theories mentioned in Chapter 2. Evidence from the real world didn't always stick to such 'teflon theories' so they continued to have an impact on society, by informing policy and practice. These teflon theories falsely claimed shiny objectivity and emotional cleanliness, without the grime of vested interest, or the dirt of funding priorities. Thus *the knowing of activity* includes that activity behind the production of knowledge and theory, as well as the impact of an idea or theory on society. Speaking in a descriptive sense, 'ideas are what ideas do'. For researchers with a normative interest in our common good, the nature of this impact is key – which takes us from *how* we try to know, to *why* we try to know.

The Activity of Knowing

In opening this thesis I focused on the question 'why'. The question 'why do we try to know' is as fundamental as 'how do we try to know', indeed they are linked. With civil action-research I try to create knowledge and ways of knowing that will serve our common good. Therefore the impact of the knowledge and ways of knowing that I enable amongst research subjects, in myself and in wider society is key. Speaking in a normative sense this time, 'ideas are what ideas do'. This is a second foundation of civil action-research, which could be termed the *activity of knowing*. By this I mean how *our ways of thinking* inhibit or enable our actions (the actionality of knowing) and how *the things we know* inhibit or enable our actions (the actionability of knowns).

Ideas won't keep; something must be done about them.
Alfred North Whitehead

The worth of a piece of civil action-research therefore depends on what actionable knowledge and ways of thinking are created and disseminated through the research process. We need to ask ourselves what the impact of the knowledge we have been involved in creating and disseminating is and could be. From the

previous argument on the *knowing of activity,* the more that the knowledge we produce involves others, the deeper that knowledge will be. This makes the educative function of interacting with research subjects an important aspect, but it also raises questions about the analysis, writing and dissemination of results. The ideas in this thesis about civil society will only be 'known' to the extent that readers use their insights from reading it to inspire or inform their own civil actions. Hence the civil action cannot stop when the writing starts.

At the time of writing, action-researchers had not dealt adequately with the issue of how we should write-up our research.[82] Meanwhile, the remarkable impact of books such as *No Logo* (Klein 2000) and *The Silent Takeover* (Hertz 2001) which were aimed at the mass-market but said little that hadn't already been argued in academic publications for years (mine included) illustrated academia's imprisonment of ideas in ivory towers. Academic protocols, which dictated how we wrote and researched, excluded people from academic insights and vice versa. From a civil action-research perspective a research finding isn't worth anything if it doesn't have a positive impact on life. If we are to "democratise knowledge" (Gaventa 1993), the writing and dissemination processes must be civil actions in themselves.

As Gill Coleman (2001) wrote in her Phd, "I am engaged in a process of active reality-creation -- indeed, that generative possibility is one of the purposes for doing this." Such an approach posed a major challenge for academia in general and for PhD students and their assessors in particular. The academic community required that a PhD thesis add something original to a body of knowledge. Thus researchers often looked for something original to say by seeking a gap in published academic argument - a gap that might merely be semantic. However, we shouldn't want to have something to contribute because we need a PhD, but we should want a PhD because we have something to contribute: it's a chance for extensive independent research and a passport to new possibilities in effecting social change. I challenge the assumption that we researchers should write a thesis only in order to qualify. It is unrealistic to think that, when we come to write, civil action-researchers can suddenly switch off the motivation that has driven our research, and our civil action become secondary to obtaining a qualification. Moreover, it is by considering how our analyses and our conclusions will aid our common good that we can gain a greater insight into the processes of formulating knowledge and arguments as happens in civil society. This is because it is civil activists' constant questioning of data, arguments and emotions that arise from their concern for our common good, peoples 'emotional intelligence', that helps create the powerful arguments heard from civil society (Goleman 1996). By being emotionally involved during analysis and write-up we can question and reflect on our data and experiences again and again and

[82] The 'learning history' approach was one response to the literary implications of action-research, as it allowed the researcher to document their personal learning (first person inquiry) and to share the views of the researched without overt editorial influence (so it was suggested), and was a useful tool for reporting back to the researched (Reason and Bradbury 2001). However, the extended tabular form of writing used was extremely inaccessible for all but the most devoted reader, thereby restricting the ability of the documented research to influence thinking more widely.

therefore enhance the quality of our findings. Therefore, I hoped that *action-writing* would come to be recognised as an essential element of civil action-research.

This thesis is the product of my own 'action-writing' approach, and as such it reads differently to the theses I've read before. Perhaps the first thing people will notice is that I use the first person, rather than the more standard third person. This is because I don't wish to make any pretension that this is objective work and want to emphasize my subjective, personal approach. Peter Reason and John Rowan (1991, p. xiii) argued that it is important for a researcher to be clear where he or she "is coming from in taking a particular view", for example by giving "details of political standpoint, current work and relationships, [or] general way of being in the world." This is why I started the thesis with 'My Introduction', a partly biographical offering (Chapter 1).

Another break with tradition comes when, after citing their full name for the first time, I mention writers by their first name. This might seem pedantic, but is inspired by the feminist tradition of challenging the values implicit in language, which "determine how we perceive possibilities for change" (Weedon 1987, p. 86). It is a simple device to re-personalise ideas and theories in academia. This is because academics had a tendency for turning particular people with contestable (and often changeable) arguments into intellectual icons that must be paid homage to, in the academic 'order of service'. This sanctifying of theory and theorists meant that social researchers often "mistrust experience" and "regard it as inferior to theory" (Stanley and Wise 1993, p. 153). Yet theories should be at our service, not the other way round. We should not seek to research something to be able to test or add to, for example, Foucault's or Chomsky's arguments, but seek to do something in society, and if Michel's or Noam's work can help us then fine.[83]

Seeing theory as servant, not master, also suggests that a traditional literature review section is not appropriate. Such reviews were often written to show the examiner that you were aware of a range of intellectual icons. This was not my intention in Chapters 2 and 3, because for civil action-research, a literature review is pointless if it doesn't make an argument that is functional to the thesis' ability to promote our common good in some way. How might a thesis promote our common good? This brings us to the most important aspect of action-writing: choosing the audience and the argument.

In Chapters 8, 9 and 10, I present evidence to make the argument that 'discourse', which I take to mean an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to phenomena, is a powerful means of enabling or inhibiting peoples' thought and therefore action (Grillo 1997). I was seeing and feeling evidence of this both during my research and when I began

[83] Michel was himself fascinated by the role of the author, charting the way that author-name as a mechanism for conveying legitimacy to a piece of work changed through history (Foucault 1977). This is important to note as the development of participatory research and first person inquiry could lead to the reification of the personal inquiries of certain celebrated persons in the field.

analysing the texts of interviews, documents, diary notes, seminars and so on. Because of this I thought I should attempt to shape discourse in ways that would enable our common good, and point out discourse-shaping processes that might inhibit our common good. At the same time I had to choose an audience – thinking of my examiners is not enough for action-writing. Instead, at the 3rd ISTR conference I saw the great potential that the emerging field of 'civil society studies' had in revitalising the normative function of academia, and the emerging threat from highly funded positivist-empiricist research projects, which were stripping the 'civil society' concept of questions about values and motivation (Chapter 2). I had also attended a research seminar of civil society researchers, organised by the Aspen Institute, which was so firmly rooted in the positivist-empiricist paradigm that I sensed those people who were involved for ethical reasons began to question their ability as researchers (Annex II). Liz Stanley and Sue Wise (1993) noted that the fear of failure was so strong that individual researchers tried to hide their real experiences and simply write up their research "in exactly the same way" that previous researchers had written up theirs. By doing so we helped "to perpetuate the research ideology of 'hygienic research'" (p. 153).

Therefore, I decided to write this thesis particularly for potential action-researchers of civil society, hoping that by further exposing the myths surrounding social science and illustrating a different form of research and writing, they might be encouraged to do the same. I am aiming to help other students develop intellectual explanations for doing something that matters, and defend this approach from the traditions of academic assessment. Because I have this wider audience in mind, I have tried to write this thesis in a readable form. The result is still heavy, especially this chapter and the next, but I have tried to avoid using academic lingo for the sake of it and to sum things up in simple terms (although with mixed results!).

Attempting civil action-research and writing has not been an easy task. I have had to re-work a variety of concepts, relating to action-research, power, civil society and so on, and build from the bottom up. Most PhD theses started from a specific literature set and theoretical cue, whereas my research started from my interest in emerging social phenomena. These phenomena had not been well researched or theorised before (Chapter 3), so there was no established literature to work from. Instead, my use of theory is eclectic, serving the purpose of throwing different light on the phenomena. (This is different from the traditional approach to case studies, where the case study is meant to test the reliability of a theory.)[84]

I remain conscious that there are possible contradictions and inconsistencies in my civil action-writing. For example, as I am interested in communicating a thesis to you, the reader, I have prepared a step-by-step development of my arguments, which doesn't fully reflect the temporal

[84] Because I devoted a significant part of this thesis to re-working various concepts, I had a reduced amount of space to present all the evidence for the arguments that I make. Much reporting of qualitative research provided extensive illustrative items of data for a specific point. However, I see this as a hangover from the positivist-

occurrence of events and insights. This can be questioned in two ways. First, it sanitises the true messiness of my research process, which is dangerous in perpetuating the myth that 'hygienic research' is both possible and desirable (Stanley and Wise 1993, p. 153). Second, by retaining a linear progression of my argument I risk closing-down complexity and misrepresenting the circular looping of data collection, analysis and writing that went on during my research. I have had to find a balance between my desire to communicate and my desire not to perpetuate patriarchal approaches to research and writing. In some ways this thesis is a "manstory" of heroic struggle toward the resolution of problems (Gergen 1992). However, I undermine this in two ways. First, I report on how my methodology changed and I began asking slightly different questions of my data and my experience. As Liz Stanley and Sue Wise (1993) have shown, illustrating this learning process is important, so in the following chapters I include some examples of the thought processes I went through. Second, rather than my conclusions being solely about tying together loose-ends and making pronouncements, I begin questioning the voracity of my chosen vocabulary. Some have suggested that using irony helps to illustrate the contingent nature of concepts, and how there is no absolute truth (Gherardi 1995; Rorty 1989). Thus a humble and earnest irony can have a very different function to the nihilistic irony described in Chapter 1. Moreover, my conclusions include some questions to aid you in generating your own conclusions, or questions, as a means of opening-up the issues again (this chapter is now Annex I).[85]

After completing my research and developing this methodology, I discovered new arguments were being made in the mainstream qualitative research literature that were inviting/predicting similar approaches to mine. Yvonna Lincoln and Norman Denzin (2000) suggested qualitative research had reached "a seventh moment" where inquiry would become a moral act: civil action-research is an implementation of such. They suggested narrative might be seen as a political act in itself: action-writing is an implementation of this. They also suggested researchers might become more vulnerable in their texts: my honesty about the messiness of this research, my decision not to just try and pass the PhD but challenge academia, and my unpacking of my own concepts in Annex I were all potential vulnerabilities in the traditional academic gaze. Thankfully, therefore, I was not alone: fellow travellers appear all the time.

What, when, why, how?

It had been argued to be useful to adopt a 'general interest' method and not use a research question as a way of structuring one's research (Agar 1986). I adopted a research question because, at the outset, I thought this was the way PhD research should be done. I have retained the research

---

empiricist paradigm, to give the feel of 'weight of evidence.' Instead, in the following chapters I use personal communications to illustrate the issues that have arisen from the data and my interaction with it.

[85] Although this thesis has a logical progression, the structure is itself based on the results of the analysis, as I decided upon what would be an important intellectual contribution as a result of analysing my data and experiences. Therefore, every chapter is based on analysis. For example, it was by seeing how the methodology

question as a useful tool for focusing the arguments I make in this thesis...*How was civil society directly influencing business in a global economy for our common good?* At various stages in this thesis I develop aspects of this question, and also explain how I changed it slightly during the research. For example, in the following chapter I unpack the concept of 'influence' into four dimensions of power, which then provides the backdrop to my analysis in chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10. Moreover, throughout the thesis I develop the notion of 'civil power' as a way of understanding the influence of civil society. In Chapter 2 I discussed what 'civil society' meant to different people, and presented my own definition - participation for our common good. Yet I settled on this definition at the end and not the start of my research, when I realised that existing definitions were inadequate in describing what I had seen, heard and felt was happening. My research question is itself an answer.

I explore this research question in the context of the banana trade, focusing on experiences in a producer country, Costa Rica, and a consumer country, the UK. The reason I chose to focus on this sector was as much driven by luck and logistics as purposeful choice (Chapter 6). After my previous work (Murphy and Bendell 1997b) I wanted to explore relations between business and civil society in a non-Northern country, as I believed this might unravel some of my own cultural biases and assumptions. In addition there was a conflictual history, with many different civil groups articulating concerns about social and environmental impacts of banana production. Meanwhile, there was policy paralysis at the intergovernmental levels, as illustrated by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) dispute and the decline of co-operation between producer states (Chapter 6), which made alternative modes of influence more important to consider. I began researching the banana trade in 1997, and began trying to influence it in 1999. It is the evidence and experience from this work that I discuss in this thesis, although my arguments are also informed by my research and activism within the wider realm of 'corporate social responsibility', which I am unable to present in this thesis due to space limitations.

Within the banana sector, I had a twin track research process - one track where I stressed my role as a researcher, and another track where I overtly took action to try and influence developments. There was a lot of overlap, but I will discuss each in turn.

First, acting as a researcher, I tried to understand people's perceptions of why corporate social and environmental policies were being adopted, how they were being implemented and what impact this was having. I focused on their perceptions of power because of my belief in the power of perceptions (developed further in Chapter 5), and the difficulties of drawing insights from 'events', as I've argued throughout this chapter and in the next. To investigate these perceptions I used semi-structured interviews, email correspondence, as well as collecting a wide variety of primary

---

of social auditing was established and how it marginalised change (chapter 9) that gave me greater conviction in developing the concept of civil action-research and re-working my thesis therefrom.

documentation. I also took notes on conference speeches and informal conversations. These informal conversations were some of the most important elements of my inquiry, and we could call them 'interactive learning events.' Sometimes I would spend one or two days with my research 'subjects' chatting to them about various issues (Annex II). This often happened when people were interested in my own views on subjects they were grappling with, given my experience in these issues and publications on the topic. This was a departure with most social scientific research, whether quantitative or qualitative, which shared a positivist-empiricist hangover from natural science, by seeking neutral tests of reality. The aim of civil action-research is to change the situation under study, which would represent a contamination of the situation to most social scientists. (It is interesting to note here that insights from the "hardest" natural science, theoretical physics, suggests that we cannot measure anything at all without changing it!).

These various activities created a lot of written data, on which I then conducted discourse analysis. By 'discourse analysis' I mean an analysis of the language used (and not used) during the discussion of issues, and the formulation and implementation of policy. My purpose for doing this was to investigate how problems and solutions were being conceived of in ways that might both reflect and augment a particular way of thinking. I attempted to make explicit any implicit values and ideologies. As it had been suggested, "policy discourse analysis must examine the framing of problems to be tackled, and its connection to the generation of answers offered" (Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996, quoted in Sutton 1999).

How did I choose whom to talk to? I used what has been called a snowballing sampling approach (Silverman 1993). By this I mean that as people and issues cropped up during the research I pursued new leads and tried to find new people to talk to. There was a theoretical aspect to this snowballing though, as I was always looking for people who might have different views on the subjects I was considering. This was an operationalisation of my belief in the socially constructed nature of all knowledge, and therefore the inherent fallibility of *any* perspective on an issue (Soros 1998). It was also an operationalisation of my belief in the collective pursuit of individual preferences, so that it is important to find out what people say they want rather than hearing this from others. Hence I talked with people in the private, civil, academic, governmental and intergovernmental sectors as well as individual banana workers. In the private sector I talked with people from independent producers, banana corporations, organic producers, traders, UK retailers, and local and international certification companies. In the civil sector I talked with people from development groups, standards bodies, small activist networks, and trade union federations in the West. In Costa Rica I talked with people in organic, fairtrade, human rights, trade union, and church (local and national) groups. I talked with people in the Costa Rican government, including previous administrations, as well as representatives of intergovernmental organisations and university researchers. I also talked directly with banana workers themselves. This snowballing slowed down after about 2 and a half years when I ran out of resources - both financial and

emotional - and wanted to concentrate on taking action and writing. Detailed information on this is provided in Annex II.

Another reason I aimed to talk with a wide range of people at various levels of organisations was because I believed that the processes I am investigating in this thesis could not be understood from within any one organisation, or at any one level of an organisation. Like an increasing number of policy researchers, I rejected a linear view of policy making. The linear model conceived of policy-making "as a problem-solving process which is rational, balanced, objective and analytical" (Sutton 1999, p. 9). I did not believe that corporate policies on social and environmental issues exhibited any of these qualities, but were the result a 'chaos of purposes and incidents' (ibid, p. 5) involving numerous different actors. "Policy practices are not... a rational search. No truths or decisions... are unproblematic. A crucial aspect of all policy practice is actually and specifically what and who is included" (Apthorpe, 1986 #1112, quoted in Sutton 1999, p. 25). I also disagreed with a linear view that there might be a "divided, dichotomous and linear sequence from policy to implementation" (Clay and Schaffer 1984). Instead:

> *Policy implementers interact with policy-makers by adapting new policies, co-opting the embodied project designs or simply ignoring new policies, hence underscoring the fact that implementers are crucial actors whose actions determine the success or failure of policy initiatives. (Juma and Clark 1995).*

Hence I moved from looking at the adoption of corporate social and environmental policies to looking at their implementation, particularly in relation to social and environmental auditing (Chapters 9 and 10). This led to me to arrange a focus group to investigate the situation of women banana workers and the practicalities of conducting workplace appraisals.[86]

The second track of my research involved me taking more overt civil action to try and influence policies and practices in ways that I thought would help our common good. I did this by organising meetings (in the UK and Costa Rica), by consulting for clients involved in these issues, and by publishing reports based on initial findings, which were fairly critical and aimed at stimulating change (Annex II). With the meetings I was trying to stimulate dialogue, and further establish civil groups as key players in the operating environment of the businesses involved. Establishing dialogue is never a neutral tool as it "questions the nature of unequal relationships" (Randall and Southgate 1991, p. 349). At various stages in the following chapters I reflect on the impact of my civil action and what I learned from taking it.

---

[86] A relatively new research method for social sciences at the time, focus groups are "a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research" (Powell et al. 1996, p. 499). The method is different from that of group interviewing as focus groups rely on "interaction within the group based on topics that are supplied by the researcher" (Morgan 1997, p. 12). Anita Gibbs (1998, p. 1) summarised the benefits of such groups for identifying, first, "several perspectives about the same topic," second, "insights into people's shared understandings" and third, "the ways in which individuals are influenced by others in a group situation." Their suitability for civil action-research is illustrated by feminist writers, who demonstrated they help participants voice and validate their experiences and ideas for (Madriz 2000; Swantz 2001). This was the case with my use of the method (Chapter 9).

The Quality of this Work

By 2001, widely recognised ways of assessing the quality (or otherwise) of work such as this did not yet exist. Writing this thesis was like taking an exam without knowing the syllabus or seeing any past papers. Hilary Bradbury (2001) proposed a series of questions for assessing the value of a piece of action-research. Is the work explicit in developing a praxis of relational-participation? Is it guided by reflexive concern for pragmatic outcome? Does it ensure conceptual-theoretical integrity? Is it inclusive of extended ways of knowing? Is it worthy of the term significant? Does it help toward a new and enduring infrastructure (of research)?

I will add that we should consider how well researchers explore their motivations and values. It is interesting to note that the issue of ethics only ever came up in my university methodology course in terms of what we *shouldn't* be doing, rather than what we *should* be doing. We could look at motives and ethics a bit more by asking the following questions, which would help elaborate an axiology of civil action-research. What are the researcher's:
values and motivation?
beliefs in processes of social change?
intended outputs or outcomes that will add to these processes?
actual contribution to these processes?
insights on the nature/efficacy of these processes?
intended contribution to these processes by disseminating the work?
thoughts on this research process and openness to complexity and contradiction?

At the time of writing I had only been able to disseminate a few of the findings of my work, but this gave me encouragement to pursue the line of argument in this thesis. For example, after I published a report on the situation of women banana workers in Costa Rica (Bendell 2001d), David McLaughlin (2001, pers com) of Chiquita Brand International said that "last year we did similar assessments of all our Divisions in Latin America and really are seeing the same issues." That report, however, created some upset amongst the social auditing industry at the time, which I suppose also suggested its merit! (see Chapter 9). Before that I had published a report on the Eco-OK certification scheme, and on the back of it was invited to help the organisation address some of the problems I highlighted, indicating that it was also a useful document (see Chapter 10).

However, there are a number of weaknesses to this thesis. I focused too much on the opinions of high-level staff members in all the organisations I considered. This is contrary to my belief in the policy process, but reflects the way that organisations allowed me access to their staff. Perhaps I could have tried harder, but then there was also the question of resources. Neither did I investigate as much as I might the role of British and Costa Rican governments in the issues I was

investigating, perhaps reflecting an over-zealous embrace of a non state-centric research paradigm. I discuss the weaker aspects of my civil action in the following chapters.

Perhaps my thesis's greatest weakness is its greatest strength - the fact that my methodological approach completely changed as I was 'in the field.' If I was starting-over I would have undertaken the research in a different way. Although I knew when I started that experiential knowledge is key - I had written books based on my experience (Bendell 2000c; Murphy and Bendell 1997b) - I thought a PhD had to be different. I did not know how I could integrate my personal experiences into my thesis. So I lived a double life, as a researcher and a civil activist, and wasn't sure how I could combine the two in a thesis. It was only when I returned from Costa Rica and realised I didn't want to sacrifice what I believed in order to obtain a PhD, that I re-visited methodological questions.[87]

Now I realise I did not record as much as I could have, how my personal experiences related to my research, as I did not regard this as a legitimate method. I now regard civil action-research to be about leading an "integrated life, in which research is not separate or bounded" (Marshall 1999). We must hold "an attitude of continuing inquiry, as [we] seek to live with integrity, believing in multiple perspectives rather than one truth, holding visions of a more equal world and hoping to contribute to that practically, not separating off academic knowing from the rest of society" (ibid). This approach also means that whatever happens in one's 'research life' can be treated as valid information rather than as error (Fisher and Torbert 1995).[88] The fact methodology changes in this way can be seen as a positive aspect of action-research (Freire 1982).

Conclusions

In this chapter I have set out some of the problems with mainstream approaches to social research in the early 21st Century. I have shown that *the impersonal is political*, by alienating researchers from those researched and privileging falsely dispassionate analysis over that involving explicit motivations - a finding that is illustrated in Chapters 9 and 10. Therefore I have outlined an

---

[87] Another criticism that could be made of my work is that my own voice is strong, rather than that of the people I am concerned about. My tone may at times appear angry and arrogant. However, the banana workers were not the only people feeling oppression – so was I. The academic world seemed to oppress what I wanted to do, made me schizophrenic in the way I thought I had to perform. Therefore my angry writing and attempt to set my own rules (methodology) is an expression of my struggle. Another criticism could be made that this work appears, at times, self-obsessed, because I use my own experiences to make a point. However, when I do this it is not to suggest my experiences are special or that my arguments are new, but that insight and knowledge is gained from life as much as it is from reading. I did not, for example, read *any* feminist literature before devising what I've termed civil action-research but have since re-written the chapter to include their work. Having a particular perspective on life meant I gained the same insights that many feminists had done.

[88] Seeing how first-person inquiry was being written up, I realised that this method, like any, could become regressive, if used uncritically. For example, it could lead to the reification of the personal inquiries of certain celebrated persons in the field, in the absence of other strong criteria for judging the worth of a piece of work. It is important to remember the one possible benefit of 'modern' approaches to science was that the role of the author-name as a mechanism for conveying legitimacy to a piece of work was undermined (Foucault 1977). We should, therefore, be wary of taking for granted that certain methods and ideas are "good" (Mies 1993).

alternative methodological approach founded on the researcher's motivation to participate, or take action, for our common good. In doing this I have tried to meet Edward Said's call for academics to join the side as the weak and the un-represented, and mapped out serious methodological reasons for doing so (quoted in Storey 1999). I hope more people will heed that call and undertake similar forms of research as a justified method for understanding civil society. I've argued that this *civil action-research involves the knowing of activity, and the activity of knowing, because ideas are what ideas do.* Millions of people around the world, who were already working for our common good, were well placed to 'know' their activities and put their knowledge to good use. The Secretary General of the civil society membership organisation, Kumi Naidoo (2001), was therefore right to celebrate the fact that "by harnessing the collective experiential knowledge of individual citizens, civil society organizations contribute to building a body of knowledge that is grounded in local experiences and contexts." This body of knowledge was no less valid because not produced through social scientific method. Our subjectivities are real, our fictions are fact. Thus all social science is science fiction. The truth is nowhere - belief is everywhere. Society's case will never be closed: life *is* an X-File.

CHAPTER FIVE. Influence as Power: A Theoretical Approach to Intersectoral Relations.

What is influence? My Microsoft thesaurus suggests the noun "power", and the verbs "to sway" and "to induce." In that case, what kind of power or sway was civil society having with or over global business, and what was it able to induce from companies in the pursuit of our common good?

Investigating 'power' is no easy task, as it is a concept that has been unpacked, interrogated and problematised by hundreds of published sociologists and political scientists. There were a variety of complex and contested interpretations of the term 'power' and a variety of perspectives on how to research the phenomenon (Clegg 1989; Clegg et al. 1996). I found the literature so daunting it felt like there was a 'God of Academe' sitting atop of a mountain of books and looking down at me, asking incredulously, "do you really think you are clever enough to even consider understanding this?' As argued earlier, academics had developed way of writing that fenced-off their "expertise" from non-specialists. Janet Townsend and Emma Zapata believed "very strongly that discussions about power have become inaccessible; they tend to be limited to difficult, academic studies, as if understanding power was not everyone's business" (Townsend et al. 1999, p.1). We must recognise, as Peter Digeser did, that "the pursuit and production of knowledge itself creates norms and standards of behaviour that then open up new [and close off existing] possibilities for the expansion of power" (1992, p. 991). Therefore the literature on power represents a power-relation itself – between the writer and reader – and so I struggled to implement my theoretical conclusions by making this account of power as accessible as possible, within the constraints imposed upon me by academia. It is a struggle I may not have won, as making the simple complicated is simple, but making the complicated simple - now that's complicated!

In one of the most comprehensive – and therefore incomprehensible - analyses of the ways researchers of power have approached their task, Stewart Clegg (1989) suggested that most research on power during the 20th Century was based on a concept of "human agency, expressed through causal relations and measurable in terms of mechanistic indicators" (ibid, p. 22). Simply put, it is a view of power where A affects B in some way, be it directly, or indirectly by inaction, or through shaping the possibilities of thought and, therefore, action. Stewart pointed out that this conception of power had been dominant because of our intellectual debts to Thomas Hobbes (1996). One might suggest that the only reason for him writing about this seventeenth century political theorist was to show how much better read he was than we are, but nevertheless, his insight that many researchers had been talking about power over something or someone is important here, as this is the most obvious way of thinking about influence, but an approach that has been widely criticised (Butler 1997; Clegg et al. 1996; Couzens Hoy 1981; Digeser 1992; Gaventa and Cornwall 2001; Hardy and O'Sullivan 1998; 2000; Hayward 1998; Tanabe 1998). Therefore, in this chapter I examine the ways people studied influence or 'power over', and the

benefits and limitations of each approach for investigating my research question. I refigure the first three dimensions with the knowledge of systems thinking and insights into the social construction of categories and identities. By doing this I am able to reject the argument put forward by post-structuralists, who drew upon Michel Foucault (1979; 1980; 1986) to suggest that the concept or study of 'power over' was largely redundant (for example Hayward 2000). Instead I maintain the importance of understanding power in many different ways, incorporating a new dimension of power to my analytical frame, by drawing upon feminists who focused on the power of people and groups over their own lives – rather than over others (Kabeer 1994; Townsend et al. 1999). In addition, I discuss when and how we might be able to describe power as 'good' or 'bad', and offer a definition of 'civil power'.

Power Over

The traditional view understood power as the ability of A (the relatively powerful person or agency) to get B (the relatively powerless person or agency) to do what B might not otherwise do (Dahl 1961). Power was "a product of conflicts between actors to determine who wins and who loses on key, clearly recognized issues, in a relatively open system in which there are established decision-making arenas" (Gaventa and Cornwall 2001).

Therefore, if certain people, ideas or arguments are absent or not heard, their non-participation is interpreted as a result of their apathy, incompetence or irrelevance, not as a process of exclusion from policy-making processes. Issues of knowledge production and discourse shaping are therefore ignored, as there is an assumption that:

> *'better' (objective, rational, highly credible) knowledge will have greater influence. Expertise [will] involve speaking 'for' others, based not on lived experience of a given problem, but on a study of it that claims to be 'objective'. Little attention is paid in this view to whose voices or whose knowledge were represented in the decision-making process, nor on how forms of power affected the ways in which certain problems come to be framed." (ibid)*

In his seminal work on power, Stephen Lukes (1974) called this the *first dimension* of power. This concept can be mobilised in the research of business-civil society relations in two different ways. First, one could assume that business is in the position of A the agent of power, and civil society B, the subject of power. In this case the researcher would look for decisions that have been made by businesses that have directly affected actors in civil society. An example of this is given in Chapter 7, where the Costa Rican division of Del Monte Fresh Produce (DMFP) made decisions that effectively terminated an agreement it entered into with the local trade union.

The second approach would be to put civil society in the position of A. In this case the researcher would look for decisions made by civil groups or actors that compelled business to take certain actions. Examples of this are given in Chapters 3 and 7, where a campaign against the UK division of DMFP compelled the company to address ethical trading issues.

This view of power was most useful when researchers were looking at specific policy decisions by organisations clearly 'in power', such as local and national government. The realm of business-civil society relations is not that simple and many of the interactions are unplanned and diffuse, decisions are not made on a defined timetable, and once they are made they can be spun in ways that are appealing to an organisation's key constituents. Cause and effect is not so easy to spot.

Stephen Lukes (1974) also saw problems with the first dimension of power, which is why he distinguished it from a *second dimension* of power, which challenged the notion that power was always exercised through decision-making and therefore always observable. A number of political scientists had already argued that there was an unobservable aspect of power that involved keeping people from reaching the negotiating table in the first place (Bachrach and Baratz 1970). This unobservable aspect is as much about the non-decisions and 'inactions' of the powerful as it is about their decisions and actions. Therefore the study of policy-making must focus "both on who gets what, when and how and who gets left out and how" (1970, p. 105). Researchers employing this view examined the processes of knowledge validation, and how scientific rules have been used to declare the knowledge of some groups more valid than others, so that certain arguments are not permitted into policy-making deliberations (Shore and Wright 1997; Sutton 1999).

This second dimension of power was particularly useful when researchers looked at the intransigence and sheltering strategies of organisations that wielded legal power, such as government agencies. It is not so simple in the context of business-civil society relations, where, for the purposes of analysis, we could choose to consider either business or civil society as the agent of power. If considering business as the agent of power, we could look at ways that businesses might have been delaying decision-making and action, through stalling tactics, for example. Therefore in Chapter 8, I consider how the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) both liberated and inhibited progressive action. We could also look for ways that businesses might have been legitimating certain civil groups and issues and not others. This is a recurring theme in my discussion of the ETI in Chapter 8, Social Accountability International (SAI) in Chapter 9 and the Better Banana Project (BBP) in Chapter 10.[89]

A second way of researching this dimension of power would be to put civil groups or actors in the position of A, the agent of power. Therefore the researcher could look at the ways civil groups withhold their participation or agreement and therefore not legitimate a process (withholding 'power with', a notion discussed below). For example, Chapter 8 describes how trade unions

[89] From this understanding or power, the empowerment of people and groups in civil society to influence business policy and practice would require expanding the range of people who participate in policy making and the knowledge production process as well as broadening the types of knowledge permitted in the deliberations. "When the process is opened to include new voices, and new perspectives, the assumption is that policy deliberations will be more democratic, and less skewed by the resources and knowledge of the more powerful" (Gaventa and Cornwall 2001).

exercised this power by refusing to participate in a multi-stakeholder process I proposed, because of concerns about who would control the process, and who would participate. Another way of researching this dimension of power would be to look at the way that civil groups might restrict the participation of business in networks or organisations which make decisions that affect business practice, such as accreditation councils and standards bodies. For example, in Chapter 8 I describe how the restriction of corporate voting rights in the ETI influenced the agreed base code of labour standards.

Stephen Lukes (1974) argued that the second-dimensional view of power is limited by the notion that the exercise of power must involve conflict between the powerful and the powerless over clearly defined and observable grievances. He questioned the empirical and positivist basis of this approach, and argued that there is a *third dimension* to power, whereby A affects the intentions and expressed interests of B. Echoing Gramscian concepts of hegemony[90], Stephen asked "is it not the supreme exercise of power to get another or others to have the desires you want them to have - that is to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires?" (Lukes 1974, p. 23).

It's hard to fight an enemy who has outposts in your head.

Sally Kempton

From this perspective, influencing the production and dissemination of knowledge as a way of influencing discourse and consciousness is critical to the exercise of power. John Gaventa and Andrea Cornwall (2001) therefore pointed out that "knowledge mechanisms" such as "education, media, secrecy, information control, and the shaping of political beliefs and ideologies" become important to our understanding of power.[91] Michel Foucault said famously that knowledge is power and that:

> *power and knowledge directly imply one another... there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (Foucault 1979, p. 27).*

Discourses are 'regimes of truth' establishing boundaries of what is possible to do and think. These regimes of truth could include patriarchy, science, and capitalism. Therefore certain minority groups or women, for example, may not even see themselves as fit to have a say in the decisions that affect them greatly. Janet Townsend and colleagues suggested by way of illustration that some women "may have been taught that, for them, submission, sacrifice, and silent suffering are virtues" (1999, p. 27).[92]

---

[90] See Entwistle (1979) for more information on Antonio Gramsci's theory of counter-hegemony.

[91] There are also parallels with Paulo Freire's (1973) work on the ways that certain understandings are accepted and internalised by society to create a culture of silence and compliance within the so-called 'oppressed.' He talked of *conscientisation*, the idea that the poor need to develop a critical awareness of their own society in order to take more command over their lives. This idea was widely adopted in popular education in Latin America (Townsend et al. 1999).

[92] This is not to ignore how many women have escaped this subjugation and are using their attributes to great effect in fields such as global politics (Enloe 2000).

So if power is shaped by discourse, and discourse shaped by power, then questions of how discourses are (re-)produced and changed, and how they shape what's possible to think and do, become critical issues for civil action-researchers.

This dimension of power can be mobilised for the research of business-civil society relations in two ways. First would be to put business in the position of A, the agent of power, and investigate how they shape the discourses of civil society. However, Stewart Clegg (1989) identified a problem with this, because if the exertion of such power is effective, then the expressed interests of the subjects of power cannot be assumed to be their 'real interests'. Such interests could only be determined by theory, such as Marxism, creating circular reasoning (and creating a hierarchy between researchers and researched). However, problems with determining 'real interests' can be circumvented by focusing on process, as John Gaventa (1980) did. He focused on how B was the subject of A's mythmaking and their legitimation of ideologies, and whereby B experienced a sense of powerlessness. In addition, I encountered liberation theologists and others who articulated their interests in both practical and theoretical terms. Similarly to Naila Kabeer (1994), I found that by providing information and a space for dialogue and personal reflection, people express their interests and needs quite freely (see Chapter 9).

Another way of researching third-dimensional power would be to put civil society in the position of A, the agent of power. Therefore the researcher would seek to explore whether different actors in civil society manage to produce, use and disseminate knowledge in a way that affects the awareness and consciousness of businesspeople, and how this might affect policy and practice. There were many examples in the sociological literature of how a transformation of consciousness within civil society contributed to social mobilization, whether in the civil rights, women's, environmental, or gay movements (Calvert 1991). Chapter 8 describes how a new discourse about corporate responsibility and ethical trade was produced through civil group campaigns and its potential and limits for liberating change.

With this last example, we might question whether it is sensible to think of civil society exercising power *over* business, for three reasons. First, they were helping to create a new discourse that was possibly liberating a new form of power for managers and corporations. Can 'power over' then create new power for those who are subjected to it? Second, is this really 'power over' if the longer-term interests of those being subjected to it are actually being served? Some educational theorists argued yes to both. Although some suggested that when teachers enforced discipline they were acting in the longer-term interests of students and thus were not exerting 'power over' (Burbules 1986), others disagreed, suggesting we needed to stop assuming that exerting 'power over' is always bad (Tanabe 1998). Clifton Tanabe argued that "teachers use their power over students in the effort to transform them into people who are no longer in need of their teaching" (ibid). In describing a maternal form of 'power over', Eleanor Kuykendall (1983) noted that

"power exercised by the nurturer toward the nurtured [is] not merely dominant or controlling, but primarily healing, creative and transformative" (p. 264). I return to this issue of whether 'power over' can be 'good' or 'bad' below, when defining *civil* power.

A third query arises when we consider whether 'power over' is a useful concept if the discourse is co-created by so-called agents and subjects of power. This question was raised by feminists and post-structuralists, leading some to question the whole concept of 'power over.' I discuss the implications of their critiques in detail in the next section, but beforehand I will summarise how I refigured of the three dimensions to make them more appropriate for my study.

For each dimension, I have suggested changing the identity of A – the agent of power – from business to civil society. This is because, as Michel Foucault (1980) noted, there is always resistance to power and, as Cynthia Hardy (in Clegg et al. 1996) argued, people (and groups) participate in mutual power relations. Not only do these relations exist between 'As' and 'Bs', but they are often contingent on an array of other 'As' and 'Bs' in multiple webs of relations that inhibit or liberate power. Therefore we are all agents and subjects of power in different ways at different times. In short, B is also A. Moreover, for the third dimension of power, I did not assume the need for the agent of power to *intend* to exert power over others. As Peter Digeser (1992) noted in his discussion of Stephen Lukes (1974), while intention is important to the concept of first and second-dimensional power, it is not essential to third-dimensional power. This is important, as many actors described in subsequent chapters did not intend to exert a power over others, yet by pursuing their interests they shaped meaning-making processes in ways that inhibited others.

Another school of thought, based around issues of identity, affirms the importance of considering webs of power relations. Chantal Mouffe (1995) argued that collective categories, in this case civil society and business, or A and B, should be understood simply as unifying 'nodal points' which produce only a partial fixity of identity in particular contexts, as constructed by discourse. This perspective reminds us that because the categories of 'agent' or 'subject' of power, A or B, are socially constructed, there could be power relationships *within* those categories. In short, one observers' B is another observers' A *and* B. This observation is of key significance in this thesis, as my research reveals how some civil groups with significant influence over business were not often representative of, or effectively representing, the people on whose behalf they purported to be working.

Post-Structural Power

By refiguring the traditional view of power in this way, I am able to examine systems of power without negating questions of responsibility and subjugation. So called 'post-structural' analysts of power disagreed. Drawing on Michel Foucault, writers like Steven Appelbaum (1999), Judith Butler (1997), Cynthia Hardy (1994; 1998) and Clarissa Hayward (2000; 1998), argued because

power was so systemic one could not say anyone was exerting power over someone else. Judith Butler (1997) therefore wrote that some forms of power circulate "without voice or signature" (p. 6). Cynthia Hardy (1994) also thought that because no person or persons can be said to control discourses, they can be considered impersonal, with Clarissa Hayward (2000; 1998) therefore labelling this the "de-facing" of power. Cynthia suggested we speak of a fourth dimension to power, or 'system power' (in Clegg et al. 1996). Peter Digeser (1992) had called it "the fourth face of power" (p. 977). This theorisation of power was based on more than an embrace of the complexity of power relations. They drew upon Michel Foucault's (1980, p. 98) suggestion that power is so omnipotent it precedes consciousness, and this questions the very idea of agency: "power does not simply act *upon* a (pre-political) agent... constituting its preferences and delimiting how it might rationally act to realize them. It also produces this agent" (Hayward 2000, p. 5-6). Another aspect of their critique was that most researchers treated power as a zero-sum game, where someone could only increase their power at the expense of another, rather than increasing their power *with* others. Feminist researchers also made this critique of 'power over', and I explore this further below. John Gaventa and Andrea Cornwall (Gaventa and Cornwall 2001) integrated this positive conception of power with post-structuralist perspectives, particularly in their discussion of the creation of knowledge and discourse. They pointed out that discourse is created by everyone, in ways that enable and disable action, establishing the "network of social boundaries" that define possibility, as Clarissa Hayward (1998, p. 2) put it.

I had a number of concerns with these post-structuralist inspired approaches to power. First, I felt their criticism of the concept of 'power over' mistook the ability of researchers using that approach to consider power relations in complex systems. For Stephen Lukes (1974), A's intentions are not as important as whether B's interests are thwarted by the effects of A's actions or inactions. This means we can explore how A acts or doesn't act, and how this affects B, via a variety of intermediary processes, such as the (re-)constitution of discourse. Neither A nor B has to realise this for us to identify a power of A over B, working through systems of power (including that which influences the self-identity and action of A).

Second, by stressing the importance of the system and "de-facing power" (1998) there was the risk of de-politicising the study of power, by undermining questions about the responsibility of certain actors for creating the discourses and social boundaries that affect others. "Questions of responsibility and harm can not gain a foothold" within this conception of power (Digeser 1992, p. 992). This could undermine exploration of how certain recurring factors structure the way people (re-)create discourses and social boundaries to the detriment of others: factors such as economics and gender. This led some to imply a rather pluralist non-coercive notion of the shaping of discourse (Gaventa and Cornwall 2001). Although the creation of discourse may occur through anyone's participation in society, that participation is not equal, so the resultant discourse can still be conceived as a particular A's (an individual or group) power over B (an individual or group).

Moreover, factors like commercial interests might shape the inequality of effective participation in discourse creation.[93] For example, In Chapters 8 and 9 I demonstrate how the ethical trading and social auditing agendas were shaped in ways that marginalised, even silenced, some perspectives on how to improve labour standards. Moreover, in Chapter 10, I show how the discourse of sustainable development marginalised certain important issues related to our common good, such as labour rights, as well as the participation of certain parts of society in corporate social and environmental initiatives. Therefore discourse acts in both negative and positive ways, both enabling or disabling, liberating or inhibiting, and it can be shaped for either coercive or facilitative reasons (knowingly or unknowingly).

My third concern with post-structuralist perspectives relates to the suggestion that power pre-exists and thus pre-figures self-identity. This has implications for our understanding of 'free-will' and hence the study of both agents and subjects of power. For subjects of power, it can suggest that "there are no essential interests, no enduring set of 'true' desires and wants that are part of our natures" (Digeser 1992, p. 983). As discussed earlier, some therefore dismissed a normative approach to researching power, as we would have to make up "essential interests" for the researched. However, in Chapter 2, I outlined the essential interest of self-expression, and now seek to use this concept for my study of power.

The post-structuralist view that power pre-figures self-identity might also distract us from the way self-identity is defined in inhibiting ways by people, things and situations every day. As I described earlier, people can easily recognise their situation as being subjugated, once allowed the time and place to reflect upon their situation. Rather than being zombies defined by power, Naila Kabeer (1994) explained that women actively choose to avoid conflict in the home and workplace because "the costs of confrontation are likely to be high" - and higher for them than others (p. 227-8). They may anticipate bad reactions and therefore act to avoid them, may adopt mental coping mechanisms such as expressions of resistance, which don't really challenge their situation, or by "learning helplessness" in order to accept one's 'station' in life (Kabeer 1994, p, 227). Although Michel Foucault (1986) argued that people are instrumental in their own subjugation, we should not ignore the constraints they face and how the three forms of 'power over' shape these.

Post-structuralist suggestions that power pre-exists and thus pre-figures self-identity also led some to question whether anyone can usefully be considered an agent of power, as they are not themselves free from power-relations (Digeser 1992). This would mean that no one could be responsible for creating a discourse that inhibits others. This was based on an assumption that to be considered an agent of power one needed to have the freely-chosen intention of exerting this

[93] It is useful here to remember the theoretical perspective of Jurgen Habermas (1987), who distinguished between society's 'systems' of organisation, such as capitalism, and a society's 'lifeworld', which is the way people think, feel and act separately from the 'systems' that order our lives. Jurgen wrote about how this free-thinking

power over another. Rather than exploring whether human beings have freewill, we can explore how those individuals, albeit defined by certain expressions of power, can still exert power over others, intentionally and directly as well as unintentionally and indirectly, via discourse.

The fourth concern I have with some writers who draw on Michel Foucault arises from the argument that power is co-extensive with society, so there is no freedom from power (Digeser 1992). To some this means that power cannot be usefully considered in opposition to freedom and a normative reason for researching power becomes redundant (Foucault 1979; 1980). Instead, while accepting power is everywhere, I prefer to break-up power into that which we can consider supportive of those things we describe as 'freedoms' and that which is not. I develop this below in a discussion of civil power.

Despite the criticisms and concerns I have outlined above, the post-structuralist approach to power is, nevertheless, helpful. First, it encourages us to focus on micro-level processes rather than grand political events (Digeser 1992). The mundane explains the momentous. Second, it suggests that we consider processes of meaning-making and how this then shapes the possibility for action (Hayward 2000). Finally, it suggests that we don't treat power as a zero-sum process, and opens our eyes to the potential of co-creating power. This approach is something feminist researchers developed more fully, and I explore in the next section. In summary, I have tried to incorporate important aspects of the post-structuralist critique to build, what I will call, a 'restructuralist' approach to the study of 'power over'. Restructuralism implies a recognition of the importance of the post-structuralist critique, the continued importance of structure as a metaphor for describing causal factors in society, and a normative project for restructuring those causal factors. It uses the insight of structuration theory as a stepping-stone to more explicitly normative civil action-research.[94]

Cumulative Power: Beyond Relations of Conflict

Although the concept of 'power over' remains useful in the face of (and by incorporating) the post-structuralist critiques, on its own it can create a limited analytical frame. This is because, as indicated earlier, power is then only regarded as a 'zero-sum game,' so that B can only have more power at the expense of A. Researchers in different fields such as management studies (Conger

---

'lifeworld' had increasingly been colonised and mediated by the interests of money and power – the 'system' of capitalism. I discuss this further in Chapter 11.

[94] The debate about what is most important in shaping our societies, human agency or social and economic structures, raged for years. Anthony Giddens called a truce in 1984 with his proposition of 'structuration theory'. This allowed us to link the individual to social structures such that both are related like a chicken and egg. Change can occur at the micro or macro level, each affecting the other. As I argued in the previous chapter, there was a tendency for action-researchers to claim this 'structurational' understanding yet restrict themselves to focusing on agents, due to the dictum of participatory (collaborative) means, rather than participatory ends, as discussed in the previous chapter. As will become apparent in this thesis, I found evidence of the inability of human agency and civil power to deliver lasting changes when they were not directed at the economic structures that shape possibility i.e. when they were not restructuralist.

and Kanungo 1988; Torbert 1991), industrial economics (Axelsson and Easton 1992), and feminist development studies (Kabeer 1994; Townsend et al. 1999) were interested in the more positive attributes of being able to do things, think things, work together or share things.[95] Naila Kabeer (1994) and later Janet Townsend (1999) described this as 'power with,' 'power to' and 'power within.' This reminds us that power is a 'plus-some' not just 'zero-sum' game. For me it is this conceptualisation of cumulative power that warrants being distinguished as a *fourth* dimension. In doing this I want to be clear that discourse and other elements of the network of social boundaries are not *only* understandable from a fourth-dimensional perspective of cumulative power as the concept of 'power over' is still important for understanding discourse.

Power with is what we access by working together. This notion was popularised beyond feminist writings, within management studies for example. Francis Fukuyama (Fukuyama 1995) developed the idea that businesses depend on 'social capital', which can be seen as the ability of people to work together in groups and organisations. Peoples' ability to trust and associate with one another is recognised as crucial to economic life, as discussed in Chapter 3. For Jo Rowlands (1997) it is not only a capacity but also an awareness, "a sense of the whole being greater than the sum of the individuals, especially when a group tackles a problem together" (p. 13). This 'power with' was a major aspect of the networking of civil groups in the international banana campaign described in Chapter 7, and something spoken of by participants in the various partnerships described in Chapters 3, 8, 9 and 10.

The *power to* do things doesn't need much explaining. In Central America, if you can speak English and use a computer you've got far more power to improve your own economic situation, to gain respect and so on. I had the privilege of training someone in how to use a computer and email and saw how this new tool and skill was opening up possibilities for them to earn money, meet people and broaden their horizons generally.

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.

Eleanor Roosevelt

These two aspects of power both involve the importance of relations, but unlike the previous dimensions of power, the focus is on the positive generation of power instead of trade-offs of power between groups or individuals. Another aspect of the fourth dimension doesn't involve relations to such an extent. It is the power that Gandhi called the 'power from within,' which is shaped by one's self-conception of agency, as much as it is by outside forces held by others or a system (Nelson and Wright 1997; Rowlands 1995; Townsend et al. 1999). Therefore, Monique Deveaux (1996) wrote that there is a need "to look at the *inner*

[95] The management literature was not particularly useful for this study as most work focused on intra-organisational issues and assumed a pre-determined organisational objective such as profit (for example Finkelstein 1992; Gray and Ariss 1985). Therefore empowerment was usually discussed in terms of how employees might aid an organisation's purpose, which some queried (Appelbaum et al. 1999; Hardy and O'Sullivan 1998). Although researchers of industrial networks considered inter-organisational questions (Axelsson and Easton 1992), the theoretical insights of such work for a critical study were limited.

processes that condition women's sense of freedom and choice... Addressing women's freedom requires that we look at internal impediments to choice as well as tangible obstacles to its realization" (p. 224). Essentialist feminists made reference to the maternal function of women and their natural sacrificial disposition, and how this needs to be understood before women can begin to free more power from within (Townsend et al. 1999).

Many feminist writers argued that women need to access and develop this *power within* -- to begin a process of 'self-empowerment'. Janet Townsend (1999, p. 24) and her colleagues argued that:

> *it is possible to enable other people to do something, but not to empower them, not to give them power. If you give someone power, you can take it away: it is only if they take that power for themselves that it is theirs.*

This enabling, or liberating, could take the form of working to reduce those forces that are disabling or restricting self-empowerment i.e. reducing the power of others and of discourse *over* women's aspirations and opportunities. Alternatively it can take the form of working with people to facilitate them in finding their power from within, by seeing things differently. In the following chapters I describe a number of examples where civil groups enabled (or liberated) business managers to re-think their own role and that of their business, and to express their values at work.

In doing this we must be careful not to combine a notion of cumulative power with a post-structuralist perspective of discourse, as some appeared to do (see Gaventa and Cornwall 2001). This is because such an approach can marginalize our investigation of how discourse acts as a 'power over' – third dimensional power.

The Nature of Intention and Effect

The question of intent was not well discussed in the sociological literature on power. Some assumed a bad intent behind power, where it was about the domination of one by another (Lukes 1974; White 1983). Some believed that intent was largely irrelevant (Digeser 1992; Foucault 1980). Some focused on good intentions behind power creation and then assumed this would have a good *effect*, because they focused on the co-creators, rather than the effect of that new power on others (Gaventa and Cornwall 2001; Townsend et al. 1999). This is a problem, as in Chapters 9 and 10 I show how fourth-dimensional power allowed those who accessed it to then exert 'power over' others, with negative effects.

It seemed that most commentators on power had an idea about the intent and effect of power rolled into their ontological idea about what power 'is.' The idea that each dimension of power could be good or bad, in different contexts, was not widely discussed outside the educational literature mentioned earlier. It is, however, particularly important to my study.

With this thesis I consider how civil society was directly influencing business in the global economy for our common good. In this chapter I have defined 'influence' as the power of inhibiting or liberating action, speech, thought, or feelings. In Chapter 2, I defined civil society as participation for our common good. Therefore *civil power* is that power which either inhibits or liberates action, speech, thought or feelings in ways that promote our common good. People and groups participating for our common good access and share civil power.

I choose the words 'inhibit' and 'liberate' carefully. Much writing on power spoke of 'oppressed' and 'oppressors' (for example Freire 1973). This language suggests power as a force of A over B, whereas I have argued that this form of reductionism is not always helpful for our understanding of society. Also, just because people are held back, or *inhibited* in some way, doesn't mean that are held back or inhibited in all ways, and oppressed suggests a 'total' condition of oppression. In addition, it is probably easier for people to appreciate how they might be *inhibiting* other people and groups in some way, rather than oppressing them. We live in a society with complex *inhibitions*, rather than oppressions, and as the popular notion of inhibition suggests, we can choose to liberate ourselves from some of our 'inhibitions' - those internalised perspectives that come from being inhibited by other people, resources or discourses. Just as the opposite of oppression is freedom, the opposite of inhibition is liberation. Through their use or sharing of power, people can be *inhibitors or liberators, inhibited or liberated, and in a state of inhibition or liberation*, in different ways at different times. This is the lexicon of power I use in this thesis.

I use the adjective 'civil' to refer to both the *intent behind* and the *effect of* the power being described: civil power is power that is civil in *both* intent and effect. It is an important point to make as this thesis will demonstrate that, on the one hand, there are forms of power with civil effects that do not arise from civil intent, and on the other hand, forms of power arising from civil intent yet without civil effects. I will deal with each in turn.

First, the collective pursuit of individual preferences can be enabled or liberated by people and groups not intent on creating that outcome. Adam Smith, for example, noted that we are able to eat bread not because of the benevolence of the baker but because that baker wants to earn a living (in Henderson 2001). He argued that the pursuit of self-interest (narrowly conceived) could support our common good, through what he termed the 'invisible hand of the market.' Thus an uncivil intent can have a civil effect by providing goods and services that support our common good. This is a type of 'contingent' civil power, because the civil effect is unintentional and contingent on the chance correlation with what the person is offering/doing and the collective pursuit. Another reason for calling it 'contingent' is because its civil effect is contingent on others taking civil action. For example, the trade in a useful product still relies on society protecting property rights and other common social and economic infrastructures made possible by a history of civil actions.

Second, some people may take action with a civil intent but without an effect, or worse, an effect to the detriment of our common good (which could be understood as an 'uncivil power'). In this thesis I highlight some of the unintended effects of people taking civil action, where their success in certain areas led them to marginalise other aspects of our common good and civil groups working on these.

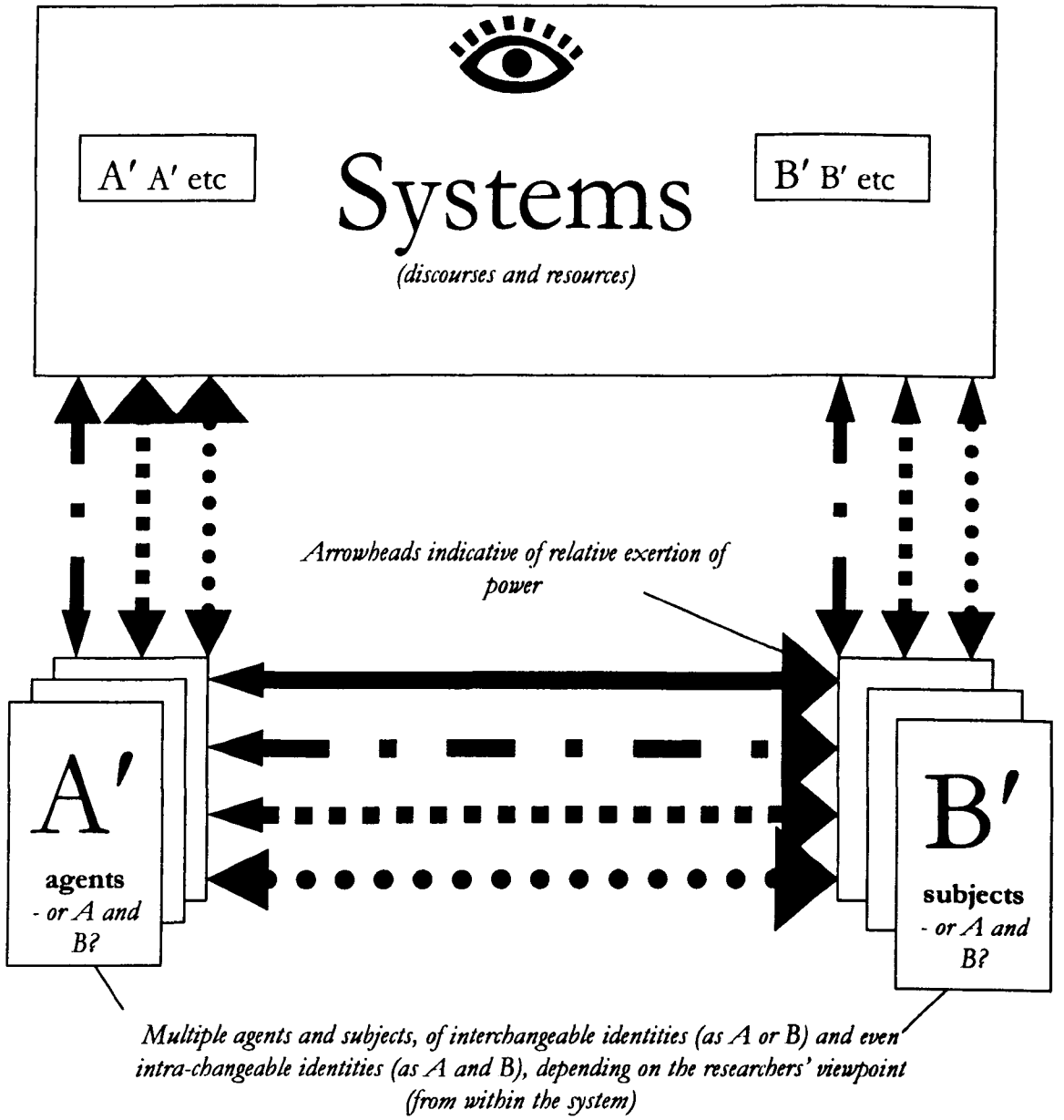
My conception of civil power is similar to the maternal nurturing power described by Eleanor Kuykendall (1983). I prefer to use the adjective "civil" for consistency with my conceptualisation of civil society, but also because I do not want to suggest this is a type of power expressed by particular people in particular situations (we can not all be mothers).

Investigating Power

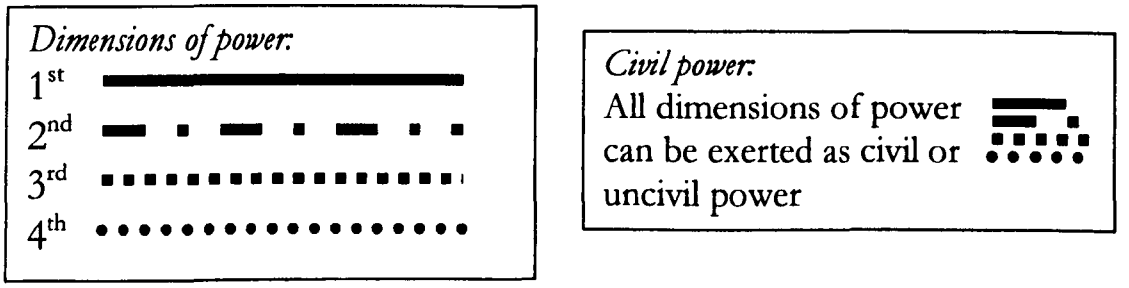
My intention in this chapter has been to map out the various perspectives on power, identifying how they can be combined for researching the influence of civil society on business. A key conclusion from this is that one view of power should not preclude another, nor should we establish a hierarchy where one is more important than another (Digeser 1992, p. 991; Torbert 1991). The importance of this point is illustrated by the earlier discussion of how the study of 'power over' could be marginalized. Therefore what I have sought to do with this research is utilize conceptions of the four dimensions of power, while re-figuring the first three with the knowledge of systems thinking and insights into the social construction of categories and identities. This multi-perspectival view of power is illustrated in Figure 2 (The Power Matrix).

From my methodological discussion in the last chapter, it follows that in investigating power and power relations, I focused on people's perceptions of that power. Although, I mention peoples' perceptions of events that could be explained in terms of first-dimensional power, I focus particularly on what Stephen Lukes (1974) called 'non-observable' power i.e. second, third and fourth-dimensional power. Stephen suggested that this non-observable power can be mobilised through representations, reputations, and institutions. Representational power relates to the process of setting, or re-setting, the terms of the debate, and through the shaping of discourse, the influencing of perceptions, intentions and actions. This relates to reputational power, where symbols of authority, credibility and so on, determine the ability of agents to shape discourse. Institutional power is a description of the power exerted by organisations who manage representational and reputational processes in some way.

Figure 2: The Power Matrix: A Tool for Analyzing Power



KEY:



In the following chapters, I analyse the way different civil groups were framing issues, the way different businesses were re-framing issues, and the way they were being jointly framed in collaborative initiatives. I attempt to determine the flow of representational power between and amongst agents in civil society and business. The way the different frames were gaining acceptance or were being marginalised indicates something of the reputational power flows between businesses and different civil groups. The joint institutions that were being established by

business and some civil groups, such as the ETI and SAI represented an embodiment of these flows, and so I sought to examine their formation and internal processes. As I conceive of 'policy' as a process where the policy making and implementation phases are intermingled and different agents can exert power at both of these 'stages' en route to the policy output or outcome, I focused on the mechanics of implementation as well as the high-level decision-making (Clay and Schaffer 1984; Juma and Clark 1995; Lindblom 1980). For example, I analysed the minutiae of social auditing, and discovered how 'professional' auditors' implementation of corporate policy decisions that had been compelled by civil power was actually inhibiting the transformative power of these policy decisions (see Chapter 9).

It is important not to forget the non-discursive aspects of fourth-dimensional power. Therefore, I also investigated the perceptions of various actors on the ability of civil society to liberate businesses' *power to, power with* and *power within*. In Chapter 7, I describe how the international banana campaign helped people in Del Monte access these forms of power, in Chapter 8 how civil groups in the ETI helped people in British retailers access this, and in Chapter 10, how the Rainforest Alliance helped people in Chiquita also access this. I describe how this process is reflexive, so that in return company managers were enabling civil groups to work on our common good in some ways while inhibiting them in others.

In addition to using the four dimensions of power, I discuss to what extent a specific instance of power can be considered civil or not. I find that this depends on your frame of reference, particularly the breadth of issues and peoples you seek to consider. Moreover, I find that by accessing and exerting civil power, one can eventually create uncivil effects. Therefore I uncover the paradoxes inherent in one's creation or exertion of power (see Chapter 11).

Civil Action-Research as Civil Power

When I was 'in the field' researching and acting, the debates about the nature of power seemed rather distant and self-obsessed. The practicalities of actually investigating neat theoretical constructs came crashing in. How *do* you actually *spot* discourse shaping, for example? A number of issues arose which I'll briefly highlight.

The first problem was a practical one – how to investigate discourse in a country with a different mother tongue to my own. The word power in Spanish, el poder, is about abilities/skills/capacities on the one hand, or strength/authority on the other (Duenas et al. 1997). Neither are easily related with the exercising of influence through discourses. In addition I was not fluent in Spanish and used a translator for much of my work. It's almost impossible to investigate discourses through a translator. Equally concerning was the fact that for many of the interviews that took place in English, that language was not the first language of the interviewees. In this sense, analysing their

discourse seemed to be unfair and rude. Because of this I restricted my analysis of discourse to documents and to fluent English speakers. (The fact that these people tended to be those in more traditional positions of power helped justify this to me).

The second problem was more of an emotional one. When I first started my research part of me almost wanted my 'interviewees' to start saying things that would fit into my nice categories and the nice 'topic guide to power' that I had developed. After the first interview I realised I couldn't approach my research like this. For one it wasn't really an "interview", as we talked for hours about the problems this man faced and what I knew of how things were developing in Europe and how his company might proceed. I didn't come at this fresh, as I had been working in this field for 3 years before starting this PhD. Consequently I had, and wanted to impart, advice. I was meeting people who were dealing with immediate issues and giving up their time to talk to me. Once in the field and seeing what was going on I didn't want to protect myself behind my theoretical constructs - to come for what I wanted and then just leave. I found that to have theoretical constructs in mind means you begin deconstructing what people are saying, and it's an alienated way of interacting with someone. Consequently I found as much of my interviews taken up by exploring issues they were grappling with, suggesting possible routes forward, and seeing their reaction. In fact, a significant number of my 'interviewees' seemed to regard my arrival more as a meeting, and brought in other people to talk with me about issues, policies and options. Thus I found in the evenings that I didn't have the 'data' I had thought I wanted, but had learned a lot more about the reality and complexity of the situation. Moreover, I found that I had established a good relationship, where I could call on them again for more information if I needed. And some evenings I was still talking with my interviewees over beers or smokes. So my experience of investigating power was not 'methodical' but enriched by truly engaging with the people and the issues. Thus these were not interviews but 'interactive learning events', as I described in the previous chapter.

This approach resulted from my interest in trying to affect the situation for the better - in taking civil action. Because of the distance between the way research was officially 'meant' to take place and the way I was conducting it because of my values, I was faced with having to hide the reality of my research and create a fiction that might meet the requirements of an academic establishment. But I knew that by trying to exert civil power, for example by organising a seminar in Costa Rica (Chapter 8) or consulting with the organisations that I was studying (Chapter 10) I was able to deepen my knowing of civil power. Surely something was wrong with social science if it negated this form of knowledge? Therefore I decided to return to the basic philosophical underpinnings of all research and realised that I could argue that this was valid knowledge, in an 'academic' sense, and developed a concept of *civil action-research* (Chapter 4). Civil action-research is key to the study

Our greatest fear is not that we are powerless, but that we are powerful beyond measure.

Nelson Mandela.

of civil power, as well as being an act of civil power, or a civil action, in itself. Given the role of knowledge in the shaping of liberating or inhibiting discourses, civil action-research must aim to create knowledge that liberates or enables further action for our common good. The communication of this knowledge is therefore fundamental to civil action-research, as I have argued earlier, and justifies my attempt to make this chapter more accessible than many prior texts on power.

So, in summary: what is influence? Bill Gates' thesaurus told me that it is power. What is power? Power is what makes us or helps us to do or not do, to say or not say, to think or not think, to feel or not feel. As various things can be labelled 'power', we can investigate it in various ways, describing it as good or bad in a particular context, depending on our values. That's simple, so why did I need to discuss all of the above? It sometimes takes a long journey to arrive somewhere quite close!

CHAPTER SIX. Bananarama: Background to the Banana Trade and Civil Society in Costa Rica.

I first visited Costa Rica in September 1997 when I was presenting some of my freshly developed ideas about civil regulation at a conference on environmental management, organised by the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). The conference was organised with the help of the Costa Rican Universidad Nacional [National University], including people from the Centro Internacional de Politica Economica para el Desarrollo Sostenible (CINPE) [International Centre of Economic Policy for Sustainable Development]. At the conference I met Dr. Olman Segura and we discussed my idea of doing fieldwork on the issue of business-civil society relations in a country in the global South, such as Costa Rica. He invited me to come to CINPE as a Visiting Professor and also suggested I talk to Monica Araya, who had completed a Masters dissertation looking at the experience of the civil group in certifying the environmental management of orange groves, something called 'Eco-OK' (see Chapter 10). Monica gave me a variety of contacts, and suggested that the banana trade was a sector that seemed to have both a lot of conflict between businesses and civil groups and also some interesting collaborative initiatives.

After the conference I decided to take a holiday and was on my way to the Caribbean beach town of Puerto Viejo when I noticed that we were passing through the 'banana town' of Siquirres, which Monica had mentioned to me as where a civil group called Foro Emaus had their office. I decided to jump off and drop-in unannounced. In my short meeting with the civil group's leader Father Gerardo Vargas that day I realised that first, I needed to learn Spanish, second, that this was a really important situation to get involved in and not just some potential 'field-of-study,' and third, that civil groups in Costa Rica were nothing like those in the UK – this was no swish office block with the latest IT systems and press officers running around with their mobiles; this place was poor, and my assumptions about civil society would have to change.

Luck is largely a matter of paying attention.
Susan M. Dodd

My next visit to Costa Rica was from March 1999 until June of that year. During that time, I was based at CINPE and I employed a semi-retired Costa Rican professor of geography, Miriem Miranda to work with me. I was keen to ensure that I obtained good access to the banana companies, and thought that with her position and experience, Miriem would be helpful in arranging the interviews, as well as helping in the translations. I returned to Costa Rica in July 1999 and remained until March 2000. During this time I conducted more interviews, participated in a number of meetings, witnessed certification visits, arranged a multistakeholder conference on social auditing, and conducted a focus group of women banana workers.[96]

[96] I spent a proportion of this time working on my second book Terms for Endearment (Bendell 2000c).

The next four chapters present my analysis of what I found and what I experienced. These require some background and so in this chapter I aim to lightly sketch a broad panorama of the economic, political, social, and environmental colours of Costa Rica, and specifically, their banana trade. It is, therefore, a panorama of the banana trade - a 'bananarama.' Any review such as this is inevitably partial and biased. I've not come across a Costa Rican summary of the United Kingdom in 7000 words, but I think if I, or any other British reader, did read such a document we would have problems with it. Therefore this chapter reflects as much about Britain and myself, as it does about Costa Rica. I say this because I have included information about the issues I am concerned with, as described in 'my introduction', and because I wish to refer back to them in the following chapters. The social and environmental dimensions of banana production were so disputed by the various stakeholders that is what extremely difficult to ascertain what the situation was (apart from contested!).[97] This was illustrated by a headline in the English language weekly newspaper in Costa Rica, *The Tico Times* (Dulude 1999a) - "Banana Workers, Industry: Clashing Realities". Therefore the following description is based on my own interpretation and would probably be disputed by some stakeholders.

Economics and Politics of Costa Rica

Costa Rica is a small country in Central America which had a population of about 3.8 million in the year 2000. Exports that year were about US$5.031 billion, slightly down on the previous year *(La Nacion 2000)*. In the mid-nineties bananas were considered the number one export. By the close of that decade they had been pipped by microchips (mostly Intel) and earnings from tourism, which vied for the top spot depending which calculations were used. Also experiencing a rapid increase was the textile sector. Bananas remained the number one agricultural export, with coffee and citrus fruits also important.

What marked the country out in the region is that it had been a 'democracy'[98] for over a hundred years. The only blip on this record was a military coup in 1948, where quite unusually, the leader of this coup then strengthened the democratic process and disbanded the army (Molina and Palmer 1991). It did not suffer the political unrest of its neighbours and as a result it had one of the most commercialised economies in Central America. It was therefore often considered more 'developed' than other countries in the region, and it did have higher literacy and lower poverty than many other countries in Latin America (Hill 1997).

---

[97] For example, until the late nineties the government agency responsible for promoting Costa Rican banana exports did not recognise that there were any social or environmental problems with banana production. "According to (Martin) Zuniga, (of Corbana), a survey conducted by an outside organisation reveals that 90 per cent of banana workers are satisfied with their labour conditions. He also displayed a graph depicting the depicting the disposal of organic solids, the use of protective gear and training in the use of agrochemicals, among other things. In all cases but one, he said, the country's banana farms were between 97 and 100 per cent in compliance" (Dulude 1999a, p. 10).

[98] See my earlier discussion on the meaning of democracy in Chapter 2 for an explanation of my use of inverted commas in this case.

Like most countries in the global South, as described in Chapter 2, Costa Rica was in debt. In 1995, its debt was 41.8 percent of its GDP, and the interest payments were 2.5 per cent of the value of annual exports (United Nations 1996). This meant the government had to attract foreign investment and stimulate exports. Consequently neo-liberal policies were widely supported by business, politicians and the media. Samuel Yankelewitz, president of the Union of Costa Rican Private-Sector Chambers and Associations (UCCAEP) illustrated the dominance of the neo-liberal view in Costa Rica, which was often equated with "modernisation". He complained to *The Tico Times* about the "oxcart" pace of deregulating the economy and opening it up to foreign investors during 2000. "Politicians are the ones who make the rules. If they would act less defensively, but more aggressively to modernize the country, I'm sure we'd see... [a] turn around" (quoted in The Tico Times Pratt 2000b)[99].

The neo-liberal policies were seen by many to be the reason why the government did not effectively apply the law relating to corporate social and environmental performance (CODEHUCA, in The Tico Times Pashby 1999). This was because social and environmental regulations were seen to impose costs on industry, and required public funding for their monitoring and enforcement. For example, in response to criticism from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for not ensuring that companies could not dismiss workers for their union activities, the government initially reacted by proposing changes to the Labour Code (ILO 1999b), but within one year this amendment had stalled in the legislative assembly. Ian Chambers, former director of the ILO office in Costa Rica explained that this had not passed smoothly because of the programme of privatisation: the government wanted state business to appear attractive to foreign investors and not have the cost burden of complex labour legislation (Chambers 2000, pers com). Another example comes from Maria Guzman, once head of the former Government's Environmental Control Office (Officina Controlaria Ambiental), which was tasked with ensuring industry's compliance with the environmental regulations of the country. She told me that they "only had a small team of 12 people" and enforcing compliance was impossible:

> *One of the significant things we did was pass a law giving companies in Costa Rica 3 years to improve their disposal of solid and liquid wastes. This was about 1992. Unfortunately it was difficult, perhaps impossible, to monitor, enforce and punish. We realised this and sought a voluntary agreement with companies. In 1994 we drafted a code and invited companies to sign it, advertising it in the newspapers. Very few international companies signed it, and I can remember only Coca Cola: no banana companies signed.* (Guzman 1999, pers com).

In 1998 the new government closed this office, so that there was no one working on industry compliance with environmental law in the Ministry of Energy and Environment (MINAE). Therefore Yamileth Astorga of the Costa Rican Friends of the Earth (AECO) argued that "we have

[99] Neo-liberal views are widely reported, as for example, the view of Robert Mundell (who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1999) that Costa Rica is a good candidate to adopt the dollar as its currency (La Nacion 2000).

good laws but they are not respected. We live in an anarchist [sic] society, as there is no government power to control companies" (Astorga 1999, pers com).

The Common Good of Costa Rica

In this section, I will describe something of the social and environmental situation in Costa Rica. In Chapter 2, I identified freedom, equality, capacity and efficiency, sustainability and community participation as key enablers of our common good. Most information that related to these enablers, which I had at the time of writing, could be grouped under the headings of poverty and human rights, the environment and labour rights (this is a result of the way issues of the common good were currently categorised by various organisations working on them). I will cover each in turn, but focus more on environment and labour rights, as these were most relevant to business policy and practice and therefore this thesis.

Poverty and Human Rights

Despite having laudable literacy rates and low levels of poverty, there was still some poverty in Costa Rica, as in most countries of the world. In the year 2000, a census showed that the income of 156,418 families in Costa Rica was not enough to meet basic needs, such as food, clothes, education, and transportation. With a total population close to 4 million that represented about 21.1 percent of all the households in the nation, slightly higher than in 1999, when it was 20.6 percent *(La Nacion 2000).*

Despite being a democracy, with no army and a free press, Costa Rica received a failing grade in the 1999 human-rights report issued by the Commission for Human Rights in Central America (CODEHUCA). The civil group identified problems of xenophobia, corruption, workers' exposure to pesticides and abuses against children. It also pointed to high levels of political corruption, excessive bureaucracies and a lack of application of the law (Pashby 1999).

Environment

Although MINAE no longer regulated industry effectively, it was highly active in managing a system of national parks that had made Costa Rica an internationally famous conservation destination. The country had a higher percentage of land given over to National Parks than any other country in the world, helping protect an extremely high level of biodiversity. In addition, the laws that prohibited building on the first 50 metres of shoreline were abided by, for the most part. Unfortunately not all the national parks were protected well enough and illegal logging was a major problem during the 1980s and nineties; surprisingly the country had one of the highest rates of deforestation in the world until the mid nineties.

In startling contrast to the award winning advertising slogan of the National Tourist Board, "Costa Rica – no artificial ingredients", Costa Rican business imported more agrochemicals per capita than any other country in the world (Kox 1998). A study by the National University's Regional Institute on Toxic Substances (IRET) found that the country imported 41 million kilos of 280 different active ingredients in 2000 types of pesticide between 1992 and 1997 *(Wolkoff 2000)*. Most of these were used in the intensive plantation cultivation of coffee, bananas, citrus fruits and increasingly cut flowers, for exportation.[100]

The World Health Organization (WHO) compiled a list of about a dozen substances considered highly toxic and banned or restricted in some countries. Of this so-called 'dirty dozen,' Costa Rica imported four: Methyl Parathion, Aldicarb, Endosulfan and Paraquat (IRET, cited in Wolkoff 2000). The later of these, Paraquat (or Gramoxone, as it is known commercially) was used primarily on banana plantations.

Labour Rights

Costa Rica ratified most of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions that were identified by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) and Social Accountability International (SAI) as pertinent to social auditing (see Chapters 8 and 9). The exception was convention 155 on occupational health and safety, although they ratified other relevant conventions and the former director of the ILO office in Costa Rica believed that the government had made progress in health and safety issues (Chambers 2000, pers com).[101] Many labour rights issues of concern in less-industrialised countries were not of such concern in Costa Rica (Bendell 2000a). Child labour was not as bad in Costa Rica as in its Latin American neighbours, although in some sectors, such as prostitution, it was a growing concern[102]. There were some more intractable problems, relating to, first, freedom of association, collective bargaining, and worker representation, second, discrimination, and third, environmental health.[103]

---

[100] The fact that Costa Rica imports the most pesticide per capita should not be taken to imply it uses the most per capita, as unlike other countries, Costa Rica had minimal domestic chemical manufacturing facilities.

[101] Other relevant ratified conventions included no. 14 on weekly rest, no 89 on night work (women), no. 90 on night work of young persons, no. 120 on hygiene (commerce and offices), no 148 on working environment (air pollution, noise, and vibration), and no. 130 on medical care and sickness benefits. Given that convention 155 had not been ratified, clearly complaints about adherence to that convention could not be made to the ILO. However, complaints and observations were made with regard to other conventions relating to occupational health and safety. ILO committee observations were published with regard to conventions 89 (1995), 90 (1995. 1996, 1997), 130 (1992) and 149 (1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996)(Bendell 2000a).

[102] A survey was completed by UNICEF, in 1995, of child labour in Costa Rica. 0.2 % of 5 to 11 year olds worked (0.4 % male, 0.0% female) without education, and 4.1% worked and studied (6.3% male, 1.6% female). 5.6% of 12 to 14 year olds worked (or 8.4% male, 2.6% female) without education, and 11.0% worked and studied (17.1% male, 4.5% female) (Figures from Lidia Torrico, El Trueque virtuoso: educacion por trabajo infantile).

[103] My analysis that these were the three main issues of concern in the field of labour rights in Costa Rica was not supported by some in the industry, who saw the issue of working hours as the one, which needed to be resolved - before they would satisfy the requirements of the SA8000 standard, for example. See Chapter 9.

Article 60 of the Costa Rican constitution stated that "employers and employees will be able to unionise freely, with the exclusive end of obtaining and protecting economic, social or professional benefits," (in Bendell 2000a) and article 341 of the Costa Rican Work Code stated that "nobody can be forced to be part of a union or not to be part of a union" (Government of Costa Rica 1943). However there remained a problem with freedom of association and collective bargaining in Costa Rica. In 1999, the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association concluded that

> *the risk for dismissals remained very significant for trade unionists, in particular in the banana plantations and in the nine export processing zones. Cases where trade union leaders and their families were subjected to death threats were even more serious (ILO 1999b).*

This finding was one of 35 opinions published by the ILO, in response to 25 complaints by different unions about the lack of application of various ILO conventions ratified by Costa Rica (Bendell 2000a). One reason for the industrial relations problems was the post-colonial history of conflict between the labour movement and foreign corporations, which resulted in strikes, violent repression, and widespread company closures at various times during the 20th Century. Another reason appeared to be the rise to prominence of 'solidarista' organisations in the 1980s and nineties.[104]

The Solidarista Movement was founded in 1947 by Costa Rican attorney and economist Alberto Martín "as a means to quell the violent clashes between workers and management resulting from ratification of the country's first Labor Code" (Pratt 1998). Since then the Catholic Church developed Solidarista organisations as part of its social outreach work. The Juan XXIII Social Organization, led by priest Claudio Solano was the promoter and administrator in the agricultural banana sector.

Solidarismo was based on a savings plan into which workers contributed a minimum of 3 percent of their monthly salaries, which their employers then matched or bettered. Most Solidaristas saved between 5 percent and 8.33 percent of their wages to their employer's equal financial contribution (Pratt 1998). Records I studied at the Labour Ministry indicated that in March 2000 there were 2132 Solidarista organisations in Costa Rica, and these were reported to include 300,000 members with collective savings of US$361.2 million (Pratt 1998). The combined savings were invested and profits paid yearly, according to each worker's total contribution. The associations also offered low-interest loans, scholarships and other benefits to their members.[105]

At first it might seem like a great system, a business-civil group partnership delivering real benefits. It took me a while to work out exactly what Solidarista organisations did and didn't do, as

---

[104] The Spanish words *solidarista* and *solidarismo* are derived from the word *solidaridad*, which means solidarity. *Solidarista* can therefore be translated as 'solidarist', believing in solidarity, and *solidarismo* as 'solidarism', the belief in solidarity.

[105] The combined savings — their own contribution fortified by their employer's — were paid to them in full when they left the company for any reason. The savings were especially important, since Costa Rica has no unemployment insurance and its pension fund is "going broke" (Pratt 1998).

different people and different documents said very different things. This was because of their controversial relationship with the free trade unions, and the *re*-presentation of the movement that was occurring because of international attention.

The problem was that Solidarista organisations were formed to reduce the power of the trade union movement and therefore make the country more attractive to transgovernmental corporations (TGCs). By providing services traditionally provided by unions they undermined the attractiveness of union affiliation. As more than half the funding of the Solidarista organisation was from the companies, so their leadership was not independent and more amenable to company interests. Despite what many managers told me, as I describe in the next two chapters, *The Tico Times* reflected common sentiment when they described Solidarismo as "Costa Rica's home-grown, union-alternative" (Pratt 1998).[106]

Although Solidarismo grew rapidly and was delivering benefits to workers, its existence was seen to undermine workers' freedom of association in a number of ways. In enshrining the principle of freedom of association, Article 68 of the Costa Rican Constitution stated that "there will not be discrimination concerning the wage, advantages or conditions of work between Costa Ricans... regarding employees' group affiliation" (in Bendell 2000c). Therefore, if a company paid a contribution if you joined Solidarismo but not another organisation, such as a free trade union, then this *could be argued* to be an infringement of freedom of association. The counter-argument to this was that Solidarismo was merely a savings plan and didn't seek to help workers to associate and represent themselves to employers. Yet this was a re-presentation of organisations whose purpose had been widely stated and applauded as creating harmony in the workplace. In addition there were numerous cases where Solidarista organisations negotiated pay and conditions on behalf of the workers, thereby assuming a role that was in breach of Costa Rican law and international convention, *because companies preferentially funded them over other groups.* Moreover, there were reports of Solidarista members and officials actively discouraging workers from joining trade unions, which was also an infringement of freedom of association, again because companies funded them and not other groups. Finally there was the influence of Solidarista organisations in other processes of worker representation, for example through overseeing elections to the permanent committees of employees.

Another issue of concern was discrimination – against women and foreign workers. Article 68 of the Constitution stated that "there will not be discrimination concerning wages, advantages or conditions of work between Costa Ricans and foreigners, or regarding any group of employee" (in Bendell 2000a). However, there were cultural dynamics of xenophobia and sexism which made discrimination a problematic issue (CODEHUCA in Pashby 1999).

First, there was the problem of an estimated 400,000 Nicaraguans working in agricultural areas and in informal jobs such as housekeeping, and the lack of protection they received from the government (Pashby 2000)[107]. In what seemed a fairly typical report in the newspapers in Costa Rica, *La Nacion* reported the:

> mass arrival *of Nicaraguans... [as] thousands of Nicaraguans* flock in *this season to Costa Rica... Costa Rican police and immigration authorities admitted that they are helpless to contain the* human avalanche *from the northern neighboring country, whose nationals are placing a* heavy burden *on the Costa Rican social security system, among other* negative aspects *(La Nacion 2000, emphasis added).*

The fact that many plantation owners readily gave them jobs with no employment rights or access to social security, and then let them go at the end of the harvesting season was rarely mentioned. This was noted by Carlos Castro, president of the government's Council on Migration: "If they weren't here, coffee, sugar and banana production would be devastated" (quoted in Pashby 2000).[108]

A second key issue was the active and passive sexual discrimination that appeared to be an extension of certain contested cultural norms in the country. In the banana sector, for example, after a number of visits to banana plantations, no one I met had ever heard of a female supervisor, and only one occasion of a woman being on a permanent committee of workers was recalled during a focus group of women banana workers (Chapter 9).

The Central American office of the ILO was also concerned about the lack of female representation in the country's trade unions. In their research into conditions of women in Costa Rican export processing zones, known as maquilas, they found that most women were not interested in joining unions because of the fear of reprisals from management, but also because the male dominated unions would not respond to them (Chambers 2000, pers com). The ILO's report of on the lack of women representation engendered a bad reaction from union bosses, who wrote critical letters to the ILO. The former director of the ILO office told me that many of the female

---

[106] Many Solidarista leaders saw themselves as in direct competition to labour unions, as illustrated by Eugenio Trejos complaint that the government was putting forward "a string of legislation that makes Solidarismo membership less attractive when compared to unions" (quoted in Pratt 1998).

[107] Although Ordinance 24432, 26/7/1995, Article 5 states that "all employers that hire migrant employees will be obliged to include them in the systems of Costa Rican Social Security... and pay the minimum wages", employers may only decide to contact the authorities when they want someone removed under Article 12, which states that "foreigners that might be working in the country illegally and who didn't take refuge under the dispositions of the present regulation will be deported according to the General Law of Migration" (in Bendell 2000a).

[108] In my 8 months in Costa Rica, I am sorry to say that I didn't meet one person who, when the subject arose, had a positive view of Nicaraguans and their presence in Costa Rica. However, there were signs that some people in Costa Rica recognised the contradictory prejudices. A roundtable was organised by the Ombudsperson's Office to coincide with the United Nations' World Population Day to look at the issue. Ombudswoman Sandra Piszk was reported as saying "we need to recognize ourselves as a receptive country, and we need to see it positively... but we also need to recognize our xenophobic tendencies" *(Pashby 2000).* In reporting the event, Christie Pashby argued that immigrants "are picking the crops that keep the economy of

union officials who had signed the letters of complaint later phoned up to say they did not agree with their union but were pressured to sign the letters (Chambers 2000, pers com).

The third key issue was environmental health and safety issues in banana, coffee, citrus fruit, and cut flower production, which I will describe later in relation to the banana sector.

Civil Society in Costa Rica

As I indicated in the opening of this chapter, it is important to challenge the assumptions we may have about civil society in other countries and not assume that civil groups have similar profiles and capacities as those in the West. At the time of this research no comprehensive national statistical analysis on the percentage of people in organised social participation had been completed for Costa Rica (Antezena 1999, pers com). However, the Arias Foundation (1998) had conducted a survey of civil group activities in Central America, detailing their missions, activities and funding.

The Arias survey asked respondents to specify their areas of interest; 46.4% mentioned development, 38.8% women's issues, and 33% environmental issues. For the 390 Costa Rican 'civil society organisations' that replied, women's issues, followed by environmental issues, were the most mentioned (Arias Foundation 1998).[109]

The main sources of funding for Central American civil groups came from domestic governments, foreign government development agencies (e.g. DANIDA, DfID) intergovernmental agencies (e.g. UNDP, UNEP), international banks (e.g. World Bank), charitable foundations (e.g. Ford, Kellogg), international civil groups (e.g. Oxfam) and their own fundraising or commercial activities. The Arias survey showed that the largest sources of funding were from international civil groups and development agencies. Financial support from domestic populations was found to be minimal, which concurs with the analysis of Andres Thompson, Ford Foundation of Latin America, that:

> *There has never been a culture of philanthropy in Latin America as it is understood in the [West]. The mixture of cultural and religious heritage, the state-centered paradigm permeating politics and social action, the strong belief in charismatic leaders and a new type of savage capitalism (as it is called) all combine in different ways in the different countries (Thompson 1999, p. 14).*

This meant that the well-resourced civil groups could be expected to have a 'clientelist' or 'donor-oriented' approach to their work, needing to be well-connected with the priorities and procedures of the international donor community in order to secure funding. This focus might have distanced them from the constituents that they were purportedly working for. Consequently the

---

Costa Rica secure. They are building new office buildings, investing in new businesses, and taking care of people's children and homes" (ibid).

representativeness of civil groups was questioned by some researchers (Castro, 1991 cited in Arias Foundation 1998), while others questioned their paternalism toward communities being affected by their work, suggesting that this is something in Latin American culture rather than the donor-orientation of civil groups (Rojas, 1998, cited in Arias Foundation 1998). The lack of local funding for many civil groups meant that they could not be *assumed* to be the expression of grassroots social movements, as civil groups are often seen in the West. Second, the extremely favourable rates of pay that could be obtained by some civil group staff who were funded by foreign agencies meant that their personal motivations should not be *assumed* to be similar to civil group staff working in the West, where rates of pay were historically less than in business and public sectors.

The Arias survey did not cover religious organisations, whereas Andres Thompson (Thompson 1999, p. 14) noted that the "strong presence [of the Catholic Church] in the social realm permeates the activities of philanthropy and voluntarism to the present day." This was illustrated well by the growth of Solidarismo, described above, which was also supported by the 'philanthropy' of corporations matching employee contributions.

By 2000, the trade union contingent within Costa Rican civil society was quite diminished. There were 681 unions in Costa Rica, recognised by the Ministry of Labour as free and independent. However, affiliation and funds were low, and in the banana sector only 13% of the workforce were unionised. As the following chapter will demonstrate, these unions began to seek new means of securing their rights to find members and then advocate on their behalf. The important aspect of these novel activities was that they were international in nature.

The international awareness and networking of civil groups in Costa Rica was an important aspect, probably resulting from the high levels or literacy, decent communications and years of openness towards the West. There were numerous examples of civil groups rapidly mobilising and making the necessary international connections to promote their cause. For example, in 2000, after the government authorised oil exploration in the Caribbean, some 40 environmental and community organizations made a joint declaration in which they demanded that the Government declare Costa Rica free of oil exploration and production, and linked it with the Conference on Climate Change in The Hague *(La Nacion 2000).* However, whether an informed and well-connected civil society would have influence or not is something I consider in the following chapters, in the context of the banana sector.[110]

Banana Boom and Bust

[109] These results would have been strongly influenced by the types of contacts the foundation had, and therefore the type of organisations that were contactable for their study.

[110] In the case of oil exploration "the Constitutional Court ruled that Harken Costa Rica Holdings could continue its exploration for oil in marine sectors off the Caribbean Coast" (La Nacion 2000).

Costa Rica was the second largest exporter of bananas in the world after Equador, and as *The Americas Review* noted, "bananas are extremely important to the Costa Rican economy and account for a quarter of its exports" (Hill 1997). In 1999 total exports were 116.2 million 40-pound boxes of bananas, earning about US$648 million *(The Tico Times 2000b)*, a slight fall from US$663 million in 1998, but still up on 1997's US$573 million (Dulude 1999b). If stacked on top of each other, that would be enough banana boxes to reach twenty-three thousand kilometres into the sky. Every year, Europeans were consuming about ten thousand kilometres of these banana boxes, as Costa Rica had a 25 percent quota of the European market until the end of 2000.

During the mid-nineties, the banana industry was a major employer, with an estimated 40,000 directly employed and 50,000 indirectly employed *(The Tico Times 2000b)*, and a total of 140, 000 jobs generated from the sector (Dulude 1999b). New statistics published by the government in 2000 show that banana workers account for 14 percent of the country's total agricultural workforce, but only 3 percent of total workers (Pratt 2000a). However, this was probably a major underestimate, given the rumoured hundreds of thousands of foreign workers who were not registered with the authorities.

Three companies dominated the access of Costa Rican bananas to the world market: Del Monte Fresh Produce (known in Costa Rica as Bandeco), Dole (known in Costa Rica as the Standard Fruit Company) and Chiquita Brands International (known in Costa Rica as Cobal). The antecedents of the latter two companies had been in banana production in Costa Rica and across Latin American for the last 100 years. For example:

> *Andrew Preston, a founder of the Boston Fruit company formed in 1885, began importing bananas from Jamaica in the 1870s... Boston Fruit and associated companies, under Preston's guidance, joined with three companies controlled by Minor C. Keith of Brooklyn, N. Y. to form the United Fruit Company in March 1899. (Chiquita 1995a, p. 1)*

The United Fruit Company was broken up because of anti-trust law into the Standard Fruit Company (which became Dole) and United Fruit Company (which became Chiquita). Other players in the world market included US-based Del Monte (see Chapter 7), the Ireland-based firm Fyffes, which took over Geest, and the Equadorian corporation Noboa.

Before experiencing problems in the late nineties, the banana trade had historically been very profitable, with a senior Del Monte executive saying in 1990 that bananas were "a licence to print money" (in Smith 1997a, p. 26). The growing popularity and profitability of the product led to a massive expansion of banana production in Costa Rica in the late 1980s and early nineties, with the land area under cultivation increasing from 20,000 hectares to 50,000 hectares in just five years (Vega 1999, pers com). Director of the UK-based civil group Bananalink, Alistair Smith (1997a) argued that the business was extremely profitable because of "the stranglehold" the major transgovernmental corporations (TGCs) had over Central American and Eastern Caribbean producing countries, "coupled with control of three quarters of the world market" (p. 26).

However, during the course of my research the industry experienced problems, as Ecuadorian producers, including Noboa and Reybancorp, massively increased their production of cheap bananas, while the TGCs' preparations for increased access to European markets proved premature, thereby leading to a glut of bananas and a price crash. Already by July 16th 1999, half way through my fieldwork, world market prices for bananas had dipped below local production costs forcing "Standard Fruit Company to turn some 23,582 tons — $7.5 million worth — of bananas into plantation mulch" *(The Tico Times 1999)*. By September, Chiquita and Del Monte had implemented "massive salary cuts and eliminated many benefits that banana workers have historically enjoyed" (Dulude 1999b). The following month, for the first time in over a decade, Standard Fruit Company cut back operations in Costa Rica, slashing exports by 30 percent, closing 4 farms and announcing it would not renew contracts with 11 independent producers (Dulude 1999b). A year later, the international prices were still rock bottom[111] and COBAL announced it was stopping buying the produce of 14 independent growers, who employed about 7,000 workers (Pratt 2000a). Consequently the profits and share prices of the major banana TGCs dropped, with Chiquita even being reported as close to bankruptcy (Bowe and Alden 2001).

A key reason for this was the situation in Ecuador. Production in Equador increased by about 15% in 2000, whilst world consumption increased by less than 2% (BananaLink 2000, p. 4). However, much of the blame for the problems facing Costa Rican banana producers was laid at the door of the European Union's (EU) rather archaic import system of tariffs and quotas. The EU had maintained a system with beneficial access for bananas from former colonies in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific, whose economies were seen to be heavily dependent on revenues from bananas. The unwillingness of the EU to change this policy was attacked across Latin America. Costa Rica's *La Nacion (2000)* reported that "the Europeans highly favor human development, but punish countries like Costa Rica, whose production is more expensive precisely because of the benefits that its workers enjoy." Francisco Alvarez de Soto, the Special Ambassador for Matters of International Trade from Panama, told the Spanish newspaper *El Pais* it was hypocritical of the EU to give aid to Central America after Hurricane Mitch (a portion of which went to rebuild the banana industry) while maintaining an import system that discriminated against Central American produce.

However, this was not the whole story. Members of the EU had restrictions on banana imports for decades and this only became a 'crisis' for banana producers when Equador increased its production and the TGCs began increasing theirs in anticipation of a more open EU market. This anticipation was fueled by the actions of the Clinton Administration, at the behest of Chiquita's Chairman Karl Lindner, who paid half a million dollars to the presidential campaign. The US government made a complaint to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) because the use of quotas

contravened the trade agreements European countries had signed. At that time the WTO did not recognise other trade agreements such as the Lome Convention and ruled against the EU, so that the US imposed retaliatory 100% tariffs on European goods, from Italian cheese to Scottish jumpers. However, the changes hoped for by the TGCs did not happen, as many EU members resented what they saw as an abuse of US power. After much wrangling, even some within the industry began to complain about the position of the US. In a January 2001 letter to the US Trade Representative's office, Dole's CEO David Murdock argued that the office's continued effort to force a different solution from that being proposed by the EU was "a naked, political effort to achieve a one-company solution for Chiquita" (quoted in the Financial Times Bowe and Alden 2001).

The main impact of this wrangling was to create instability so that the banana companies were not able to plan their production and marketing effectively. As Standard Fruit Company's lawyer, Juan Carlos Rojas, explained "nobody knows what's going to happen in the European market. Quotas changed in '93, they changed again in '94 and they will change again in 2000. There is no security for banana producers" (Dulude 1999b). The change agreed within the EU in October 2000 was to introduce a 'first-come-first-served' system for Latin American producers, which not only didn't satisfy Chiquita (who began preparing to sue the EU) but also most Central American nations, who feared losing their market share to Equador. For example, this reform threatened to wipe out Costa Rica's quota of 25.61 percent of the 2.55 million tons that Europeans bought from growers in Latin America and the Caribbean (Pratt 2000a).[112] Given this reaction, the EU changed its decision and announced it would revert to issuing licenses based on past-trade, except for 17% of imports which were allocated to non-traditional producers, and while agreeing that it would move toward a tariff-only system by 2006 (European Commission 2001; WTO 2001a).[113]

This situation was a far cry from 1972 when the Union of Banana Exporting Countries (UPEB by acronym in Spanish) was founded in order to develop means of trading which would increase the income accruing to producers for investment in social programmes and commercial infrastructure (International Union Rights, 1996). Initially the member countries of UPEB imposed a series of conditions on TGCs. In response the companies began to undermine the unity of the members, so that by 2000 UPEB had become a research agency with a small office in Panama. Consequently, rather than clubbing together to work on production levels, standards and prices, the governments

---

[111] In October 2000 prices were around $5.20 per 40-lb. box – only $0.50 above the break-even production price *(Pratt 2000a)*. The daily newspaper La Nacion even reported bananas were being sold for as low as $3.50 per box. *(La Nacion 2000)*.

[112] Jorge Sauma, president of the National Banana Corporation (CORBANA) explained that the reform favoured Ecuador, the world's largest banana producing nation, given that the costs of production are low because of low wages and the lax application of environmental and social laws *(Pratt 2000a)*.

[113] In addition to settling this dispute the WTO Ministerial Conference also granted a waiver to the Partnership Agreement between the ACP (Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific) and the European Communities (EC), also known as the Cotenou Agreement (which replaced the Lome Convention). Under this Agreement, the EC provided preferential tariffs to ACP products (WTO 2001b).

of banana exporting countries seemed destined to play banana bingo - hoping for their number to pop out of the tombola of EU committees, WTO panels and corporate boardrooms.

Social and Environmental Questions in Costa Rican Banana Production

The environmental and labour rights issues described earlier were particularly pertinent in the banana sector. Environmental problems stem from the use of monoculture plantations. To begin with, in the construction phase of banana plantations, large areas can be deforested with strong temporary erosion effects (Kox 1998). Then the monocultures are vulnerable because they concentrate food sources for particular organisms (insects, bacteria, fungi), thus stimulating their rapid multiplication. Banana plantations are therefore highly sensitive to pests, which were fought with high levels of agrochemicals. Pesticides were applied by hand held nozzles, by aerial spraying and by use of pesticide lined plastic bags put around the racemes. Aerial spraying was a particular concern given the inaccuracy of application and the fact that the plantations were working environments (they had people in them) and located close to human settlements. Moreover, companies had used certain pesticides, which were forbidden in the countries where they were made (Kox 1998).

Agrochemicals have effects on the environment and people who work in plantations. Pollutants run off into surface water such as rivers and seas, leaching into groundwater can have negative effects on wildlife, as well as contaminating drinking water supplies. Even the wash water of packing stations can contain agrochemicals and also detergents, which have an environmental impact. For workers and their families, studies indicated that repeated exposure to pesticides could lead to chronic poisoning of the cardiovascular and nervous systems, as well as of kidneys and liver. Short-term exposure was linked to health problems such as skin inflammations, eye injuries, allergies, congenital diseases, sterility and miscarriages (Wesseling 2000, pers com). The incidence of workers suffering pesticide intoxication was estimated to be 6.6 % in the Atlantic banana region of the country (Hernandez and Witter 1996). There were also concerns that the post-harvest fungicides applied to prevent rotting in transit might be linked to miscarriages and birth defects such as hypospadis (Rojas 1999b, pers com).

The problems with freedom of association described earlier also existed in the banana sector. "Following the pullout of United Fruit from Costa Rica in the mid-'80s because of militant union problems, banana companies turned to Solidarismo, a unique Costa Rican system, to try to resolve industrial disputes through dialogue" explained *The Tico Times* (Escofet 1999). A number of the complaints made about Costa Rica to the ILO were by banana unions, and the ILO made specific references to practices on plantations in their published opinions (Bendell 2000a).

Discrimination was also an issue in the banana trade, as I indicated earlier in discussing the sexual division of labour. Evidence from a focus group I organised in Chiquita's Finca 6, (see Chapter 9)

suggested discriminatory practices with regard to accommodation, in contravention of ILO convention 100 on Equal Remuneration (1951).

Some critics also pointed out that the workers only received a small percentage of the revenue generated from their labours, while the foreign banana corporations had celebrated healthy profits prior to the price crash in 1999. In addition, these critics argued that the establishment of plantations disrupts small-scale development, as it requires land consolidation, which often means unsettling communities and traditional farming (Foro Emaus 1998a). In their book *The Social Causes of Environmental Destruction in Latin America* (Painter and Durham 1995), the authors showed how the conditions facing impoverished families on the one hand, and the granting of land on a concessionary basis to powerful individuals and corporations on the other, created inequalities and incentives for land use without conservation. Therefore some critics in civil society rejected the transgovernmental banana corporations entirely:

> *We do not believe in the economic development that these companies and the government are following. We do not believe in the transnationalisation of agriculture. They take and exploit our land and they use technology that is inappropriate. These companies can't change: in the long-term monoculture is impossible in the tropics. We believe all they can do is greenwash this. Our advice was to leave the country, but the minimum we asked for was for them to respect our laws. (Astorga 1999, pers com).*

The environmental manager of Chiquita Brands International in Latin America, Carlos Vega, recognised these social and environmental concerns, but thought there were a variety of other reasons why people could be so critical of the banana sector:

> *Agriculture is a very emotional topic, not like car manufacturing for example. Nobody says 'Toyota out of Costa Rica'. People feel very nationalistic about [agriculture]. We've seen it in Europe too, with farmers getting angry about this or that... People here see it as a political issue too, much more than other industries. Second, agriculture and environment are issues that everyone has an opinion on. I'm not an expert on astronomy so I wouldn't make a statement about that. But lots of non-experts talk about and criticise environmental practice or agriculture. These things create a lot of noise around our company. The third thing to remember is the attitude of the States and Europe. We don't go and criticise what you do in your country, but you do ours. We don't criticise your strawberry growing and all the pesticides used in that. We are always having to respond to your agendas, needing an ear in Europe and an ear in the States. We could say there is a fourth thing, and that's IT and communications which make the world smaller. All of this adds up to much conflict and controversy (Vega 1999, pers com).*

Ideas for Change

Against this sort of backdrop, in his analysis of pesticide use in Central America, *Cultivating Crisis*, Douglas Murray (1995) suggested that innovative strategies for pest management were most likely to be produced by communities working in conjunction with civil groups rather than government and international development agencies, which represented the interests of an "agro-industrial" complex that believed in and benefited from the continued use of agro-chemicals for pest control. The search for alternatives to government-oriented strategies in order to change the style of development in Latin America was discussed by a number of development theorists. In the conclusion of *The New Politics of Inequality in Latin America*, Douglas Chalmers et al (1997)

promoted the idea of "associate networks" as a way forward for challenging a crisis of poverty and inequality in Latin America. These networks were identified as offering alternative forms of representation and participation to the poor and excluded. The following chapters chronicle 'associate networks' of civil groups and actors that were attempting alternative ways of influencing the banana companies so they might to make a better contribution toward the common good of all stakeholders in the banana sector.

CHAPTER SEVEN. What a Banana Palaver! Forcing Change in Business through an International Banana Campaign.

Let's imagine...

...you're a manager of a company and you're being pestered by letters from these do-gooders asking weird questions about pesticides and unions and stuff in Central America. "What's it got to do with them?" And what's it got to do with you, you work in the UK division. They've got their facts wrong anyway, surely? You can just ignore them, they'll go away... wont they?

Or, if you prefer ...

...you're a campaigner. You're hot. You're laughing.. And now you're dumping. A tonne of stinking rotting banana skins on the doorstep of Del Monte's Head Office in Dartford, Kent. You wanted a meeting. But now you're on TV, in the press. Will the man from Del Monte see you?

Welcome to the world of the banana-brand-bashers. The foot soldiers on the battleground of corporate reputation, equipped with the simple weapon of pester power in their fight for a just and sustainable banana trade. Yes, it was 1997, but still it took a ponging pile of banana skins to get us working toward respecting our planet and the people who live on it. That's just how screwed up things had got.

In this chapter I will describe some of the successes and failures of an international coalition of civil groups that were campaigning for a change in the way banana companies did business. I'll also look at the perceptions of the various actors in industry and civil society about what changed and why, all in an attempt to gauge the true power of pong. Well, you know what I mean - direct action and the stench of injustice ;-)

The following analysis is the result of dozens of formal interviews, many informal discussions, a number of meetings, seminars and conferences, countless emails and a filing cabinet of documents collected over 3 years. Despite this, I still don't know quite what to think, as it seems impossible to really 'know' the situation in the banana industry in Costa Rica. The past, present and future of the industry are completely contested. To illustrate, I'll paraphrase just a few of the conflicting views I heard...

companies pulled out of the south in 1984 because of the strikes!

No they didn't, it was because they had exhausted the lands there!

We don't use herbicides here at El Roble Plantation!

Oh yes they do, here's a picture from El Roble to prove it!

Solidarismo don't interfere with worker representation or the unions!

Of course they do, they were designed to do so!

The fungicide chambers were introduced to improve health and safety!

No they weren't, they increase production and the dangers of inhalation!

We don't aerial spray when workers are in the fields!

A right banana palaver! It put me in difficult position trying to figure out what was going on. It was difficult, but I tried to focus on issues of process, and so if a company said it had done something, for the purposes of the research, I accepted it and explored why it took the action and how.[114] Even then, campaigners would say that something happened because of them while the companies would turn round and say they were doing it, or would have done it, anyway. Although I'm not a devout empiricist, you will see below that some of the timings of events were rather suggestive. Therefore, the following story is an important example of both the potential and limitations of civil power in *forcing change* in corporate policy and practice.

The Unregulated versus the Unheard

In Chapter 6 I described the broad characteristics of the policies of Costa Rican governments in the nineties, working toward deregulation, economic liberalisation and privatisation in order to generate foreign investment and export revenues. Some of the problems these policies were causing for the effective social and environmental regulation of business were presented, including the situation where there was nobody in the environmental ministry working on business compliance with environmental legislation in the late-nineties. Moreover, efforts by the Ministry of Health to impose stricter controls on the banana companies had been thwarted by some companies. For example, Maria Guzman, former head of the Oficina Controlaria Ambiental in MINAE, told me of her work with the Ministry of Health in 1997 on an agreement to regulate the banana companies:

> *This work was quite well advanced when the banana industry pressured the health ministry not to sign the agreement. This pressure was exerted at the highest levels of the ministry: with the politicians not the civil servants. It might be corruption, and there are certainly a lot of businessmen in politics. Since the new administration took over the agreement is in the bin. (Guzman 1999,pers com).*

The co-ordinator of the Costa Rican civil group network Foro Emaus, Father Gerardo Vargas (1999, pers com) explained that since the early 1980s many national companies had been established, although still supplying the foreign banana corporations and that "they are owned by government types... which means that the production and the administration are managed by the same people."

There were also problems with the issue of labour rights, as I mentioned in the previous chapter. Director of the SITAGAH banana union, Ramon Barrantes, told me that during the nineties they had filed with the Ministry of Labour about 50 testimonies from workers complaining about specific problems and had received no response: "They have just filed them," he said (Barrantes 1999, pers com). Because of this the union complained about the Ministry to the high court of Costa Rica, which had condemned the Ministry about 20 times by 1999. SITAGAH also sued some of the companies concerned in the high court, and on February 12th 1996, three of the

companies were found guilty (all three were owned by Cobal: Gacela S.A., Guopinol S.A., and Oropel S.A.). The court then referred the case to a civil court for a decision on how much the companies would have to pay the workers and unions. In a decision, which appeared to completely overstep their jurisdiction, in February 1999 the civil court overturned the verdict and criticised the conduct of the unions for defaming the companies. Ramon said "they ordered us to pay Oropel S.A. their legal expenses, but the company will say how much should be paid. Of course we have no way of paying" (Barrantes 1999, pers com).

Given these problems at the national level, the unions turned to the international community and have been petitioning the ILO increasingly over the last few years; my research of the ILO databases showed that 25 complaints had been registered with the ILO about labour practices in Costa Rica by March 2000. By that same date the ILO had published 35 responses to these complaints, and dispatched technical teams to advise the government. However, in 1999 the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association concluded that:

> *in spite of the direct contact missions which were carried out in 1991 and in 1993, serious discrepancies remained between, on the one hand, the law and national practice and, on the other hand, international standards regarding collective bargaining. (ILO 1999a).*

The contact missions did lead to some amendments to legislation so that union officials no longer had to be Costa Rican nationals, and strikes in the agricultural and public sectors were made legal (Government of Costa Rica 1943). However, former Director of the ILO's Office in San Jose, Ian Chambers (2000), accepted that these were not the issues that were of most concern to unionists, and that the ILO had little power over its signatory governments, and none over corporations. For example, in 1979 the ILO made a 'Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy', but there was no provision for a dispute settlement procedure and any complaints were referred to a committee, which in any case had only issued two opinions in its first decade in operation (ILO 1989).

The history of relations between banana companies and banana unions appeared to have been a struggle between the unregulated and the unheard. Affiliation to banana unions dwindled to about 13% of the Costa Rican banana workforce (Barrantes 1999, pers com) and SITRAP's Carlos Mora considered that:

> *It's a very unequal struggle when a union with such limited resources has to fight against the large [trangovernmental corporations]. We're pitched against the great power that the banana corporations have. Chiquita, Dole, Del Monte – they really are a power to be reckoned with in this region" (quoted in WDM 1997d, p. 9).*

Carlos was quoted as saying this in *Action,* the members' magazine of the World Development Movement (WDM) in the UK. This illustrates how, as governmental and intergovernmental

[114] However, it became apparent after a while that I had been lied to by at least one corporate staff member.

processes had failed them, the unions began making connections with international civil society to access a new form of civil power to 'take on' the corporations.

Getting Connected

During the nineties, the various civil groups with an interest or stake in the banana industry started to network both internationally and across traditional sectoral divides. In my research I found how this process of networking helped civil groups access 'power with' each other, through the sharing of information, the coordinating of campaigns and policy messages, the sheer weight of numbers, the pooling of resources, and the confidence that comes from a sense of solidarity. Perhaps the most important aspect was the role of Northern groups acting as loudspeakers for the concerns of the workers in banana plantations and their communities. In this section I describe the history of this process.

Networking on banana issues in Costa Rica was stimulated by a pastoral letter "On the Uncontrolled Expansion of the Banana Industry" from Alfonso Coto Monge, which criticised the social and environmental impacts of banana production and questioned the Christian character of the Church's promotion of Solidarismo (see chapter 6). The letter provoked strong condemnation from the industry and the parts of the Church involved with Solidarismo. As a result in 1992 various labour, environmental, small farmer, ecclesiastical, indigenous, and community organisations gathered in Casa Emaus, in the Caribbean port city of Limon, to discuss what could be done. They decided to form *Foro Emaus*, "with the aim of fighting for humanizing and reducing the negative impacts of the banana industry on health, social justice and the environment" (Foro Emaus 1998b, p. 3). Six years later it had twenty three organisational members, and had been busy publishing information on the situation in Costa Rica and making connections with organisations abroad to raise awareness. Participants in this coalition explained that this work was possible because of each member organisations' openess to learn from each other. In particular, the trade unions had developed a new approach which made it easier for them to collaborate with other civil groups, as Gilbert Bermudez (1999b, pers com) explained:

> *Trade unionism was debilitated considerably, because they did not consider deeply what kind of trade unionism was needed. However, the banana unions have developed a new type of trade unionism: innovative, self-critical of the past and in the process of developing new union practice. Previously the trade unions were against the banana companies but today we recognise that production is very important and that we must sit jointly with the companies to solve the problems of production.*[115]

The trade unions also began to network internationally. The Coordinadora Latinoamericana de Sindicatos Bananeros (COLSIBA), which means the Latin American Coordination of Banana Unions, was established in 1993 and by 2001 had 40 member unions in 8 countries. Through this networking they began to better understand their local situations in terms of global processes and wrote in 1995 that "with economic globalisation the workers bear the greatest burden of sacrifice

so that the companies for whom we work may remain competitive" (quoted in WDM 1997c). The majority of its member organizations had also affiliated to the growing International Union of Food and Agriculture Workers (IUF), based in Geneva. From the mid-nineties the IUF began reaching out to non-union groups in civil society to find new allies for their work. For example, the files of the UK campaign group BananaLink were full of urgent action requests from IUF staff.

BananaLink had been formed by Alistair Smith in early 1996 as a splinter group from Farmers Link, which had been campaigning on farmers' issues, in the UK and abroad, for a number years. BananaLink was one of thirty-five members of a European network of civil groups in eighteen countries working on banana issues, called Euroban. The network met about 3 or 4 times a year, conducted research on issues such as a possible social clause in the WTO, and organised "urgent actions in support of worker organisations" (Chambron 2000, pers com). It focused on mobilising activists and consumers across Europe to pressure governments and companies to respond to Southern civil groups. For example, they organised a campaign to pressure the European Commission to look at ways of promoting better access for social and environmentally preferable bananas - the Commission received 150,000 postcards from six countries in 5 months (Smith 1997b, pers com). Fundamental to the ethos of Euroban was that it sought to *serve* the needs and interests of civil groups in banana producing regions, rather than adopting its own stance and priorities. This distinguished it from many other Northern campaign coalitions, who had access to the civil regulatory mechanisms described in this thesis, while not being well-connected -- with and not mandated by -- the constituents whose lives were affected by the issues concerned.

This increased networking at local, regional and international levels, and between different types of organisation in civil society, was putting in place the systems for effective communication of the concerns of people in producing countries to people in consumer countries. Change was in the air.

Change in the Air

All the banana company managers I interviewed recalled how during the nineties the environment rose up their work agendas. As described in Chapter 10, by 1993 Cobal (Chiquita) was heavily involved with Rainforest Alliance and Fundacion Ambio on an environmental management system. Two years later Bandeco (Del Monte) established an environmental department and appointed Manuel Miranda to develop a management system (Miranda 1999, pers com). In 1996 both Standard Fruit Company (Dole) and Bandeco (Del Monte) made a decision to pursue certification to ISO14001, while also in that year the international corporate team of Chiquita decided to work toward Eco-OK certification for all of its production (Chapter 10).

---

[115] The union support organisation, ASEPROLA, argued that most trade unions in the region failed to adapt to new realities, and stuck to redundant ideological reference points and an over-reliance on the state as mediator. They advocated a new trade unionism that would seek allies in the rest of civil society (ASEPROLA 1998).

Different managers had slightly different perspectives on why they began working on environmental issues. Chiquita's motivations are explored in Chapter 10. Bandeco's (Del Monte) Managing Director, Donald Murray (1999, pers com), explained that they set up the environmental department because "we wanted to begin working towards a position where our company would rank in the category of sustainable development." Donald explained that there was no direction coming from Del Monte head office at this time, as "they were in survival mode" and it was a Costa Rican initiative (ibid). His environmental manager, Manuel Miranda (1999, pers com), asserted that "we didn't do this because of Eco-OK" but "because of the changes we perceived in the market." He further explained:

> *I had met many Europeans when I was working in Africa and knew their attitudes on these things. I've always been interested in this area and support WWF. Then Donald Murray decided to really go for it and appointed me to take it forward...(ibid)*

Manuel explained how it was a tough job but "if we didn't do it what would we tell our grand-children?" (ibid.) Here we see how the increasing awareness of environmental problems, that had been championed by activists since the beginning of the 20th century had spread to the business community by the nineties (Murphy and Bendell 1997b). This awareness was able to release the 'power within' managers given their emotional commitment to ensuring an environment worth living within in the future. Donald Murray (1999, pers com) also reflected on his personal motivations but argued that there was a strong business case for action:

> *Let's be frank about it, it was public perception. There is a marked trend in consumer awareness and opinion in Europe and also now in the States, concerning the way their products are produced. People don't accept lower standards than those in their own countries. We have a label that we want to stand for quality, so we had to address these concerns.*

This confirms the analysis of Father Geraldo Vargas (1999, pers com), of Foro Emaus:

> *For 100 years the big companies didn't want to change the way they worked but now they want to change because of consumer pressure and new requirements for certification. Pressure has come about because of consumer campaigns in Holland, Germany, USA and UK. The international companies are more open than the national companies, because they worry about their image in the US and Europe.*

In December 1998 Bandeco were certified to the environmental management systems standard of the International Organisation for Standardisation (IS014001) by the firm BVQI. To achieve this they had spent US$200,000 on consultancy and certification, US$300,000 on training and education and US$2,000,000 upgrading facilities - mainly new equipment for water treatment, fungicide chambers, and warehouse re-construction (Murray 1999, pers com). This meant that by 1997, when the new government regulations had just hit the bin, the environmental departments of the big three banana companies were, to a greater or lesser degree, busy spending hard cash on changing their operations, because of their increasing consciousness of environmental issues, and their sense of a growing public consciousness of environmental issues in consumer countries. However, the social dimension of sustainable development was not knocking loud enough on the

door of the environmental departments. Instead, the human resources departments of the big three continued their questionable approaches to worker welfare and rights, slamming the door on critics. But that was before the pong...

Go Bananas!

BananaLink's Alistair Smith first met Gilbert Bermudez of the Costa Rican banana union SITRAP at the European Parliament in 1993, after Gilbert had been called upon to give evidence on problems with freedom of association in Costa Rica. He also knew Harriet Lamb, who was Head of Campaigns at the time at the World Development Movement (WDM)[116]. When they began this action in 1997, they had 20,000 supporters, including 7,633 fully paid up members, participating in 125 local groups across the UK. Harriet was planning their new 'people before profits' campaign on transgovernmental corporations (TGCs) and development. Alistair persuaded WDM that there was a serious case to consider in Costa Rica, and working with a Southern group like SITRAP was essential for a credible, responsive campaign. Also important in WDM's considerations were that bananas had become the most popular fruit in Britain, that Costa Rica was the third largest source country for bananas in the UK, after St Lucia and Jamaica and that the trade involved a number of well-known TGCs (Coates 1999, pers com; WDM 1997c).

Everyone has the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of their interests

United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, Article 23.

In preparation for the campaign, Harriet travelled to Costa Rica and held a number of clandestine meetings with "sacked or vicitimised workers, facilitated by local SITRAP contacts" (Coates 1999, pers com). She was aided by a young independent researcher writing her dissertation at the time, Maria Furugori. They heard first hand accounts of sexual harassment, victimisation for union activities, the aerial spraying of workers in fields and communities, as well as the workers about the affects of the agrochemicals to which they were being exposed. They decided to focus on Del Monte Fresh Produce (DMFP)[117] because it was the largest producer in Costa Rica and financially buoyant at the time (in 1996 it recorded its highest profits since 1991, at US$102.7 million (WDM 1997c). In addition, Gilbert Bermudez thought that the Director of Del Monte in Costa Rica, Donald Murray, would be the most open to change (Smith 1999, pers com).

WDM published their report *Saying yes to the best – Justice for banana workers* in July (WDM 1997c), and were interviewed about it on the BBC World Service. Maria Furugori explained to listeners that:

---

[116] A democratic membership organisation, founded in 1971 to campaign on issues that directly affect people in developing countries.

[117] In 2001, Del Monte was owned by the Abugazali family, but at the time of these actions, 80% of it was owned by the IAT Group, based in Santiago, Chile (The head of the consortium, Carlos Cabal, became a fugitive from justice). The share capital was held in the United Arab Emirates, the corporate headquarters in Miami and

Lots of workers suffer from chronic allergies and also their children, little babies who cry every time the plane goes by spraying fungicides... they react in an extreme way. There are also many workers who have a history of being poisoned... whether they are applying herbicide... fungicide or insecticide, and they suddenly become very dizzy, sometimes lose consciousness... and then they have to be taken to hospital. I have met with parents of babies who have been deformed, mothers who have had multiple miscarriages for no reason...[118]

200,000 leaflets criticising Del Monte and encouraging people to "Go Bananas!" were inserted in mailings ranging from the Amnesty International Magazine to the BBC Vegetarian Good Food Magazine as well as distributed at music festivals, student fairs, development education centres, and by the 125 local WDM groups. As a result DMFP UK received about 5000 critical postcards from campaigners (Coates 1999, pers com). WDM also started a petition, which eventually totalled 8000 signatures when it they handed it to DMFP UK in early 1998. In addition they organised a speaking tour for Doris Calvo and Carlos Mora from SITRAP, who appeared at events like the Shared Planet conference organised by Third World First (now People and Planet), as well as giving interviews to the media and meeting with trade unions, other civil groups and Members of Parliament, during October 1997. But the arrival in August of a small van at the UK headquarters of DMFP UK was a decisive step in their campaign against the company, as they proceeded to dump a tonne of banana skins on their doorstep. The action was picked up by several TV channels and within three weeks they had scheduled a meeting with executives from Del Monte. The *Financial Times* reported that: "It was the sort of telegenic direct action increasingly employed by campaigners wanting to get themselves noticed – and, according to campaigners, it worked" (Wilson 1998, p. 3).[119]

WDM had demanded a meeting within a month (WDM 1997a), to which Del Monte agreed in a letter on August 29th. DMFP UK Marketing Manager, Dickon Poole wrote that they were "extremely incensed by the WDM report, the accusations and tactics utilised..." (1997, pers com). He had "serious reservations as to the real objectives of the World Development Movement / BananaLink" and questioned whether they were "genuine, politically motivated or competitor inspired?" (ibid.) Dickon also wrote that "if you are people with genuine concerns and not politically or competitor inspired, then Del Monte are prepared to progress" and demanded that the campaigners not target Del Monte any further (ibid.)

Before their meeting WDM and BananaLink replied as follows (1997a, pers com):

WDM and Bananalink would withdraw the campaign against Del Monte if Del Monte:

- *recognised independent free trades unions on all its plantations*

---

the accounts done in Monte Carlo. Some shares were traded publicly on the New York stock exchange (Murray 1999, pers com).

[118] It should be noted that there was not conclusive evidence attributing all cases directly to the chemicals, yet there was a strong possibility that they are at fault, and crucially, the systems were not in place to allow the effective credible scientific analysis of the problem by external bodies.

[119] Other media stunts included decorating the statue of Theodore Roosevelt in Grosvenor Square with bananas as a 'Miss Chiquita' impersonator handed out US dollars "to symbolise the way the company has bribed the US Democratic administration in order to win a larger share of the world trade." The action took place on the day that WTO announced it had upheld the ruling against the EU banana regime (WDM 1997b).

- *stopped victimising union members*
- *stopped intimidating workers not to join unions*
- *began negotiations on the reduction and control of agrochemicals with the independent trades unions.*

Perhaps wanting to increase the pressure on Del Monte, or avoid tackling real crime, the British government's police headquarters, Scotland Yard, phoned them to warn that "future actions were being planned, according to their information, in or around their operations" (WDM and Bananalink 1997b, pers com, p. 3).[120] Also trying to be helpful, the British government's Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food faxed the company a copy of Fairtrade Labelling Organisation's (FLO) code of conduct for banana producers (ibid.) On September 3rd the two sides met, with WDM and Bananalink reiterating their honest intentions and Del Monte their honest denials. Consequently they agreed to meet once again after DMFP UK's management had gathered more information on the situation. Over the next few weeks John Murray and Dickon Poole of DMFP UK worked on obtaining as much information about the situation in Costa Rica as possible, with the intention of rebutting the campaigners' claims.

Aspects of a typical counter-campaign ensued, with DMFP UK's public relations company, Shandwick, accused of spreading false information to disrupt the campaign by wrongly informing Amnesty International that WDM and Bananalink were using their name in their campaign material (Lamb and Smith 1997, pers com). They also commissioned the production of a leaflet to send to the people who were writing in to complain, called *In harmony with the environment*, which reassured readers that "we work every day to preserve our company's most valuable asset: our people, providing them with safe working conditions to protect their health" (Del Monte 1997). In a tactic very reminiscent of Aracruz Cellulose and other corporations facing criticism (Murphy and Bendell 1999), the Costa Rican division, Bandeco, organised a few thousand workers to sign a petition denouncing the campaign in Britain. The 'Bandeco Workers Petition to WDM', on September 19th, translated as:

> *The experience lived in our country with other [non-solidarismo] organisations [specifically trade unions] has been bitter, it gave us suffering, pain and great losses due to their participation in political movements and activities foreign and contrary to the interests of the working class. This is the reason why these so called leaders and their organisations are rejected. We prefer ours – peace, harmony and dialogue with our employer.*

It needs to be noted here that few of these workers would have been working in banana plantations in the Southern Zone in the early 1980's, which this statement referred to. Therefore they would have had to be *taught* this history, either formally and/or informally, to be able to endorse this statement. It is interesting also that the statement never mentioned the word 'union', and was so categorical we could feel sorry for any worker having a different opinion! WDM and BananaLink replied to DMFP UK (Lamb and Smith 1997, pers com):

> *we have received a letter signed by the Permanent Committees on a number of farms in which they denounce the petition sent to us in September. They say the document was put together by the company*

[120] Although I write about this with tounge-in-cheek, it does worryingly suggest that the security forces were being used to spy on civil action for corporate interests.

not the Permanent Committees themselves and that the workers were under pressure to sign it and at times were deceived into signing it.

The campaign worried the other companies, Solidarismo and the Costa Rican government, who saw the campaign as an attack on the country's reputation. In October 1997, the head of the government's banana export promotion agency, Jorge Sauma, travelled to Germany to find out "who was responsible for organising this campaign against Costa Rica" (quoted in Sequeria 1997). In December, they held a meeting with the banana companies and the German and British ambassadors to discuss how they could stop SITRAP and Foro Emaus's campaigns in Germany and the UK. Then the following April CORBANA, ANAPROBAN and the Union of Independent Banana Producers held a press conference to denounce the campaign. Meanwhile the head of Solidarismo argued that it was a geo-political campaign supported by the European ex-colonies and by international trade unionism (Standard Fruit Company 1998). Dole's operation in Costa Rica, the Standard Fruit Company, even convened a group of Masters students from the University of Costa Rica, to make recommendation to Dole's executives about what it should do and say (Standard Fruit Company 1998).

At the time of the campaign against Del Monte, WDM and BananaLink began writing to the British supermarkets to explain what they were doing and why[121]. They believed that the supermarkets, which sold about 73% of all bananas in Britain at the time, could "respond to consumer's concerns by pressurising the banana companies to clean up their act" (WDM 1997c p. 9). At the time the supermarkets were going through a transition in the way they were understanding and handling these issues. Some supermarkets initially responded to the campaign with old-style public relations. For example, Tesco responded to a letter from WDM's Barry Coates through their customer service department, in a letter quoting verbatim the environmental and social publicity material from their suppliers (Cummings 1997, pers com). Other replies were more constructive, with Waitrose's Head of Buying proposing a meeting to discuss "common ground for the common good." Many companies were realising that it was in their commercial interest to change their approach to critics, as the fresh produce trade magazine *Fresh* noted in its editorial at the time:

> *World Development Movement's report attacking banana suppliers in Costa Rica is the latest in a long line of criticism levelled at retailers and fresh produce suppliers. Although some would dismiss the claims as uninformed and ill-focused, we should not forget that these are emotive issues with the potential to alienate a significant number of consumers. For this reason, those supermarkets developing codes of conduct and suppliers who are working to meet them should be congratulated (Fresh 1997).*

Here we see then that although many retailers were unconvinced that there were real problems or that these were their responsibility, there was an emerging business case for working on ethical trading issues. The campaigns were creating a new discourse within the business community that suggested it was prudent to manage these issues in order to protect your company's reputation with customers, as described in Chapter 3. But where would this lead?

The Man from Del Monte Says Yes!

When the SITRAP representatives were touring Britain, the Director of DMFP UK at the time, John Murray, invited them along with representatives from WDM and Bananalink to a meeting at the Post House Hotel in Wrotham, Kent. Alistair Smith (Smith 1997b,pers com) recalled:

> *At the meeting the director of Del Monte's Costa Rican operations appeared. He'd never met the union leaders before, even though they were from the same town. Instead the UK management had summoned him half way round the world to a hotel in deepest Kent to talk. It made us realise the effect this campaign was beginning to have.*

That meeting began a process of dialogue that, within two months, led to the signing of an agreement between the management of Del Monte's Costa Rican division Bandeco and SITRAP, in San Jose. It was called the "macro-agreement" and was described by Bandeco Managing Director, Donald Murray (1999, pers com) as "a public acknowledgement that we defend the right to affiliate. We do not promote affiliation." The fourth point of the agreement specified that "BANDECO recognises the trade union's right to receive fair and equal treatment with respect to Solidarism" (Bandeco/SITRAP 1998). The drafting was done in Costa Rica, with WDM and Bananalink giving advice they had received from the IUF, and Dicken Poole forwarding information from UK banana companies (Coates 1999, pers com).

Donald Murray (1999) explained the reason for signing the agreement was "to meet the aspirations of SITRAP. We wanted them to trust us, so they needed to see we are trustworthy." He had concerns about signing the agreement, because "SITRAP did a lot of damage on the labour scene 20 years ago... they were affiliated to the communist party, a major force in Costa Rica at the time. There were many strikes and protests, which became violent and people were shot." However, he "perceived a refreshing change in perspective, especially in the person of Gilbert Bermudez, who sought dialogue not confrontation per se" (ibid). Donald recognised that an agreement needed to be found because of the campaign in Europe, but explained that the company wanted to present it in a different light in order to make it more acceptable to those in the industry:

> *WDM is not helpful when it says things like "we made Del Monte change their policy". It is a mistake because it depicts what happened as Del Monte being forced into this – something which people may resent in the future... yes, in Del Monte and in other companies... We have a machismo culture here and to suggest you submitted to coercion is not on, it means that you are... deficient. We view the agreement differently, we view it as a way of demonstrating our good faith and providing an aperture for stakeholders. (Murray 1999, pers com).*

Therefore, he explained publicly that "we do not see it as yielding to the pressure. We have taken the decision that we will not evade these people..." (quoted in BananaLink 1998, p. 14). Donald was also keen to stress the opportunities involved, and told me that "there are buyers in Europe who are happy to pay us more for our produce because we adhere to certain standards. They are

---

[121] Harriet Lamb also wrote to Lyndsey Morgan at the Banana Group, spelling out their concerns and listing specific points that they felt should be included in any code of conduct (Lamb 1997, pers com).

premium clients" (Murray 1999, pers com). He therefore regarded the changes in consumer markets as "refreshing," noting that:

> *Because working conditions in some farms in some countries are dire, the bananas from these farms enter the market at a lower cost. We call it social dumping. Our standards and our codes mean we have higher operating costs... This competition is unfair, but the WTO doesn't allow for any regulatory response in consumer countries. (ibid).*

The agreement was delayed slightly in order for Donald Murray to go to every work centre and meet with farm management and explain to them what they were going to do and why: "we didn't want them to be offended -- no, that's the wrong word -- we wanted them to know anyway" (ibid). This indicates the major ramifications the agreement had for Bandeco and the banana industry generally, given the history of conflict between companies and unions, and the activities of CORBANA and others to undermine the campaign of SITRAP and Foro Emaus. Donald explained that there were vocal critics of what he had done, who said that he had "bowed to blackmail" and had signed an agreement with an organisation that had virtually no representation in the workforce (ibid). The internal and external criticism existed throughout the short-life of the Macro Agreement, and seemed to play a part in its eventual demise, as I explain below.

Fragile Relations

At the outset representatives from SITRAP and Bandeco met about every 6 weeks to further develop the agreement and discuss workplace issues. The union usually sent an agenda 5 days before the meeting and the company added things to it if they needed (ibid). Initially some progress was made with joint meetings with workers at the plantations, although Gilbert Bermudez complained that members of the permanent committees and administrative personnel from the San Juan XXIII School (Solidarismo) participated. The free circulation of union managers inside the company's installations was established and company facilities were made available for union meetings. Notice boards for union leaders to use were provided in the working areas. However, Gilbert reported that there was some resistance from local management, who didn't always put the display cabinets in the places requested by the union representative, or didn't give the key for the cabinets to the union representative and in some cases non-union material was put in them. He also reported that some workers protested at the meetings, shouting and making noise to disrupt the meetings.

There was resistance from outside Bandeco, which also interfered with the implementation of the agreement. Gilbert's report on the Macro Agreement argued that "after the resolution was signed some rumours went out, instigated by the Juan XXIII School...(which manages solidarista organizations) that the macro agreement didn't exist and the company would continue with its anti-union policies and no one would be protected by the unions" (Bermudez 1999b). Alistair Smith (1999, pers com) explained that the banana companies were "pouring lots of money into

Solidarismo for it to train managers on the kind of tactics to deploy to persuade workers not to join unions. We're talking about psychological tactics."

There was also resistance to the agreement within Bandeco. Gilbert Bermudez (1999b, pers com) talked of a "duality" in the company, whereas "the top management recognize and support the agreement, the average manager's approach to labour relations often restricts it, because they support the Solidarista associations" Donald Murray (1999, pers com) did not share this perception of problems with middle management but suggested that "SITRAP must understand the depth of antagonism from the 1980s." However, he said that "there are no managers who are boycotting our agreement."

Donald did recognise that there had been "a few stumbling blocks," but put this down to SITRAPs unrealistic expectations:

> *I think they thought we were going to promote union affiliation, but we weren't. SITRAP were expecting more from this but are finding it difficult to promote affiliation. Just because people have the right to affiliate - and do not feel threatened if they do - does not mean they want to. I believe out of 4,500 or so employees only 150 are affiliated to SITRAP (ibid).*[122]

However, Gilberth Bermudez (1999b) complained that the new dialogue was not leading anywhere. He recounted a situation where a worker in Monte Libano, called Wimar Matarrita "was fired without reason." He asked SITRAP for help, "which we did, yet the company denied to talk about the case and nothing was solved" (ibid).

When I interviewed Gilbert Bermudez and Donald Murray on May 4th 1999 they were both still talking about the agreement positively, despite these problems. Ten days later the company called a meeting, which Gilbert said he attended and waited for 40 minutes before leaving without seeing Donald. That fractured the fragile trust, a fracture that was compounded in the coming months as Del Monte announced that it was firing its workers and rehiring them on lower wages and with less benefits, in an attempt to reduce costs because of the dramatic slump in the international market price for bananas. During this difficult time Donald Murray did not respond to my emails, and by September Gilbert Bermudez (1999b) said the agreement was in the bin:

> *There is not union freedom on Bandeco's plantations, the acts against the union movement make the workers distrustful of the Macro Agreement as a real change in attitude toward union politics... Costa Rica describes itself as a democratic country, but we know essential human rights are not respected on Del Monte's plantations.*

The agreement failed because of a number of factors: first, pressure on Donald Murray from the Costa Rican industry, which dampened his and his colleagues' enthusiasm for the agreement; second resistance to the agreement from within the company; third, the high expectations of

---

[122] Donald recognised however that it was a natural extension of the agreement that if a union reached 33% representation in the workforce, by Costa Rican law, they would be the sole representative for workers in their negotiations with the company.

Gilbert Bermudez regarding what could be attained by the agreement; and finally the international market, making the company take drastic action to protect their revenues. The international banana campaign forced the issue onto Del Monte's agenda but failed to deliver the changes being sought. This shows the limitations of civil power in the face of macro-economic imperatives, a concern that I will return to. However, the campaign did influence the thinking of some elements within the banana trade, which had knock-on effects, as I will explain below.

It's Good to Talk

As described above, the campaign against Del Monte did get the attention of the other industry players in Costa Rica and the UK. After meeting with the campaigners for the first time, Dickon Poole of DMFP UK contacted the UK marketing coalition of eight banana companies, imaginatively called 'The Banana Group,' to try and establish dialogue between them and the campaigners. Not everyone thought the campaigning helped, and Waitrose's John Foley (1998, pers com) said at a conference that it "drove banana companies into the bunker" so that the British Retail Consortium and the supermarkets had to work at getting them out of the bunker to endorse a code and the need for their compliance to be independently verified. He argued that the process was delayed because of the corporations' fears. IUF General Secretary Ron Oswald (1998, pers com) retorted, explaining that various civil groups had been pleading for dialogue, but were ignored: "The only fear was because of their own behaviour," he said.

On November 4th 1998, the UK Banana Group published a Code of Best Practice setting out minimum working conditions, which mirrored the base code of workplace practices drawn up by the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), as described in the following chapter. However, an earlier draft of the Code did not include all the issues stipulated by the ETI, and this demonstrated the influence that the campaigners had in making the Banana Group aware of their arguments and the retailers' response, in the form of the ETI (see the next chapter). Indeed, before the campaign, the concept of ethical codes of conduct was not common parlance for the UK's banana traders, as illustrated by the use of inverted commas around "code of practice" in Dickon Poole's letter to WDM (1997, pers com).

WDM, Bananalink and members of Euroban were not only focused on raising awareness of the conditions of workers in banana plantations through confrontational campaigns. They were also active in attempting to establish multi-stakeholder dialogues on potential solutions. The most significant example of this was on May 4th 1999 when over three hundred people converged on Brussels from five continents for an International Banana Conference, organised by the coalition of European civil groups, Euroban. This conference included representatives from all the major private traders, 30 governments, independent plantation workers unions from 22 countries, other civil groups, journalists and leading research scientists. BananaLink (1998, p. 1) reported that:

That they should choose to participate in a forum whose agenda had been set by other actors in the world banana trade, many of whom are highly critical of corporate behaviour, was significant in itself and broadly welcomed.

The campaigners began to sense a change in attitude, an 'opening up', from the companies. This was felt at both the international and local levels. In Costa Rica, in May 1999, Gerardo Vargas (1999) explained that:

a lot has happened in the last two years, and the last 4 months especially, which has changed my perspective. We have met with the companies a number of times and the government is now interested in talking to us. This has led to greater understanding on both sides. This only happened because of pressure in Europe and US via our international contacts and using our documentation.

In the preamble to the draft 'International Banana Charter,' which was prepared for the international banana conference, Euroban (1998, p. 1) also reflected on this change in attitude:

the major banana companies are increasingly aware that the road of cut-throat price competition has little to offer even for these companies themselves. There are signs of willingness to begin discussions with trade unions and to discuss corporate codes of conduct.

Several governments, including the leading exporter Equador, said that they would use the Charter as the basis for their own discussions (BananaLink 1998, p. 2), and some of the banana companies stated their intention to keep open the dialogue. This intention was illustrated by Aurelie Cornil Foucaut (1998), of Dole Europe, in her letter to John Daly, then Coordinator of Euroban:

Dole is hopeful that the international debate which is beginning and the knowledge shared by those present at the conference will lead to common understandings as to how best achieve a sustainable banana economy.

However, one letter from one member of staff isn't sufficient evidence for a change of approach across the corporation as a whole. For example, just before the conference, Dole's Costa Rican division, Standard Fruit Company organised a seminar for students from the University of Costa Rica, where it invited them to help advise the company on a strategic negotiating position for the conference that could help undermine the international banana campaign (Standard Fruit Company 1998). The students briefing also explained how Dole management were "worried about the 'macro agreement' recently signed between another transnational corporate and one union" (ibid).

In 1998 there was still a lot of corporate defensiveness. The day before the conference in Brussels, a few thousand miles away in Cincinnati, home to the headquarters of Chiquita Brands International, the local paper published a special 18-page supplement on the company. Cincinnati Enquirer's reporters Mike Gallagher and Cameron McWhirter accused the company of a wide range of abuses, including claims that the company had destroyed a whole village in Honduras to eliminate a union; bribed officials in Columbia; secretly controlled dozens of independent Latin American banana firms and had harmed the health of workers and others through its use of pesticides. The whole supplement was also available as an interactive website and over the coming weeks, the newspaper and its website reported on the fallout from the supplement, such as

sackings of those implicated in the report and investigations being launched by regulatory bodies around the world.

The company denied all the arguments of the newspaper. Moreover it complained to the FBI about reporter Mike Gallagher's accessing of company voice mail, and threatened to sue. Two months later the newspaper disavowed its own finding with a front-page apology and announced that $US10 million would be paid to settle any legal claim. Many commentators saw this as an example of how a local paper could be pressured by its corporate owners. The editor at the time was sacked and began legal proceedings against his previous employer, accusing them of defaming his professional character by scapegoating him to avoid legal battles with Chiquita. Reporter Cameron McWhirter blamed Mike Gallagher for not telling him how he obtained the voice mails. Mike Gallagher was prosecuted for 'stealing electronic information' from the company and was facing a lengthy prison sentence when he decided to reveal his source within the company, who then threatened to sue him for breaking their confidentiality agreement. This pressure and litigation is a sorry tale, revealing the threats to the freedom of the press, as mentioned in Chapter 2. Clearly it is not possible to trespass on the truth - it is our common land - and those who enclose it are stealing from us all.

What was worse was how this story was wiped from history. If you go to the Cincinnati Enquirer's website and look at the archives you will see that on May 3rd 1998 there was no front-page headline about Chiquita, and over the following weeks there were no articles about the pressure building on the company[123]. These stories were replaced by slightly enlarged adverts. If you read the letters page you'll also find that there were no letters sent to the paper about their story on Chiquita during the month of May. Again you'll just find larger-than-normal adverts. On the web, this history didn't happen. This was the first major example of how, in the internet age, truth could be wiped from the face of cyberspace and web annals re-written to offer a different account of the past. There was no blazing fire of books to symbolise the destruction of opinion; this 'cyburn' happened silently, behind closed doors. It has always been said that the victor writes the history, but now they could re-make it.

Chiquita's action against the Enquirer illustrated its schizophrenia toward society at that time. Although it was beginning to open up to critiques and change its practices, it refused to recognise the validity of some reporters' claims and preferred to ruin their careers. While people like the environmental manager, David McLaughlin, tried to move the company forward (see previous and subsequent chapters) many others still marched to a drumbeat called denial. An example of this was the company's input into an international conference of women banana workers in June 2000, in the form of a report prepared by public relations firm Edelman. Whereas the regional Latin American managers of Chiquita recognised there were a number of discrimination issues they

[123] http://enquirer.com/backissues/

needed to address (McLaughlin 2001, pers com), the Edelman report denied that there were any problems and used irrelevant anecdotal evidence to make a case for Chiquita being pro-women. As one activist at the meeting told me, "I'm glad to know they donated some furniture to a women's research centre in the States... really relevant eh?"

This womens' conference was also organised by Euroban, but didn't attract the same industry participation as their previous conference. Only one Southern industry interest was represented, in the form of Martin Zuniga of Corbana, in Costa Rica. That Costa Rica was the only country representing their industry illustrated the influence of the international campaign and the associated work of the Ethical Trading Initiative (see the next chapter) in putting social issues on the agenda of business and, through the supply chain, upon operations on the ground.

For me, that women's conference highlighted the need for building the capacity within civil society to seize the opportunities for change that were being created by the success of the international banana campaign in raising issues. The conference brought together women worker representatives from around the world to exchange information, and it was a wonderful moment of solidarity when they agreed a common statement about their concerns. Yet both the participants and organisers showed a lack of understanding of mechanisms for taking forward the agreements and proposals coming out of the meeting. The participants seemed to regard submitting petitions to governments and industry as a mechanism for change, with promoting Fairtrade the only other mechanism available. There was a lack of focus on what the key points of leverage were and which processes they should become involved with to make the greatest difference. For example, there was no discussion as to how to promote a gendered perspective in the work of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), the Conservation Agriculture Network (CAN), Social Accountability International (SAI), or in the deliberations of framework agreements between TGCs and the IUF (see below). However, some actors were seizing new opportunities to work with corporations...

It's Better to Agree

From 1999 onwards the IUF was increasingly effective in opening dialogue with TGCs on behalf of its members, as the following examples illustrate. The IUF affiliated banana workers' union SITRABI and Bandegua, the Guatemalan subsidiary of Del Monte Fresh Produce, were in conflict after the mass dismissal in 1999 of workers employed on three Bandegua-owned plantations and the subsequent assault by two hundred armed men on the union leadership, which was organising a mass protest against the dismissals. "In response to pressure from the IUF," claimed the organisation, Del Monte publicly repudiated the anti-union violence (IUF 2001). Local negotiations, however, had remained deadlocked over the issues of reinstating the dismissed workers on the three plantations and recognizing SITRABI's right to organize and represent the workforce. However, in March 2000 the IUF and Del Monte signed an *international agreement* to serve as a framework for resolving the disputes through *local negotiations*. The agreement set out

conditions for a negotiated settlement: the right of all workers previously employed on the plantations to return to their jobs, the unimpeded right of all workers to join SITRABI, the right of that union to represent workers for collective bargaining, and the right to a single collective agreement covering the three plantations (IUF 2001). In consequence, the following October a collective agreement covering nearly 500 workers was signed by SITRABI and the management of the plantations. IUF (2001) emphasised the role of international co-ordination in empowering the local unions:

> *International negotiations between the IUF and Del Monte were able to achieve what otherwise would not have been possible within a purely national framework, particularly in view of the Guatemalan government's chronic inability to uphold freedom of association.*

The pressure from various international civil groups campaigning in support of workers rights in producer countries appeared to be paying off – the corporate head-offices were willing to talk. IUF organised a meeting in May 2000 with COLSIBA, the National Federation of Labour in the Philippines and the three US-based banana TGCs to explore establishing "a permanent international joint labour-management committee to monitor labour relations throughout these companies' operations" (IUF 2001). On September 6, the first meeting of the Standing Committee for the Banana Industry was held in Costa Rica, attended by representatives from IUF, COLSIBA, Del Monte Fresh Produce and Chiquita. The result of the meeting was a joint communique in which Del Monte and Chiquita agreed to adhere to ILO Conventions 87 and 98 (Freedom of Association, Right to Organize, Collective Bargaining), 29 and 105 (Forced Labour), 100 and 111 (Equal Remuneration, Discrimination), and 138 and 182 (Minimum Age, Child Labour) as the "standards and conditions" defining "their responsibilities towards their workforces." The Standing Committee planned to meet regularly to review progress in this regard. The IUF secretariat were cautiously optimistic that the new dialogue opened up at the corporate level would lead to changes throughout the operations of the TGCs:

> *We do not imagine that a single agreement, or series of agreements, by themselves can transform a historically conflictive industry (moreover an industry in severe crisis) into a social model with the stroke of a pen. We do, however, believe, that internationally-negotiated framework agreements on trade union rights, backed with sustained union organizing on the ground and international support from consumer, labour rights, and environmental organizations, are an indispensable element in shifting the global banana industry onto a new foundation built on dignity, justice and respect for human rights (IUF 2001).*

Then ICFTU General Secretary Bill Jordan argued that this agreement was "an excellent example of a sophisticated and effective use of international trade union solidarity to defend workers jobs and their unions" (quoted in Bussey 2000). Where a national macro agreement failed, would international framework agreements be able to succeed?

Forcing What Exactly?

In this chapter, I have chronicled aspects of the international banana campaign, showing how its mobilisation of consumers and the media established the issues of worker welfare and worker

rights on the agenda of banana companies and their corporate customers. A company that was targeted by 'brand-bashers' could be said to experience *first-dimensional* power – being compelled to change otherwise it would be commercially damaged. Yet it was as much managers' concern that their business would be damaged that induced action. Thus it was a form of *fourth-dimensional* power, in shaping the perceptions of managers on the importance of reputational damage. This power depended as much on people and organisations developing a discourse of corporate social responsibility as it did on the campaigners. This case also showed how other companies witnessed this brand-bashing and acted to manage risk to their own brand. I describe this as fourth-dimensional power, rather than third, as it *enabled* actors within business to argue for change, and thereby inhibited those practices were counter to our common good. We also saw evidence of another form of fourth-dimensional power, as the campaign helped unlock the 'power within' managers who began to express their personal concern for these issues. It could also be argued that by signing the framework agreements the corporates were able to access 'power with' international unions in order to help change their internal operations in ways that the market required. This was because these companies were massive organisations and we saw in the case of Bandeco, there was internal resistance to change on labour rights issues, so it was difficult to police and enforce a significant change in industrial relations policy. Trade unions could help in this change process.

Critical to the legitimacy of the international campaign were the links that Northern civil groups had with those in the global South. Alistair Smith (1997a, p. 28) had always argued for solidarity with the needs of the people who matter – the workers and their communities:

> *Too often in the past, consumer campaigns in the North on issues of production in the South have failed to really take account of the views and struggles of those whose livelihoods depend on that production. Experience shows that it is not an easy task to negotiate and implement production standards equitably, giving an equal voice to both producers and consumers. It remains to be seen whether the real interests of producers are respected in the long-term.*

What Alistair alluded to was that these campaigns could make change inevitable, but the nature of change depends on who is involved in the subsequent processes and activities, and how they are involved. The inability of confrontational tactics to address these implementation issues was recognised by Oxfam's George Tarvit (1999, pers com):

> *Postcards and public campaigns do have an effect but on what? I think it's legitimate to get more companies to sign up to these principles, but the other aspect of our work is how do you start to put principles into practice? Postcards don't seem to have so much of a role here.*

So the next step is to influence the policy processes that are kicked off by *forcing change* tactics. In the previous chapter I focused on one such process, and in the following three chapters I explore the experience of *promoting* and *facilitating change* tactics. The lesson from this chapter is that such approaches are fragile in the face of macro-economic pressures on the company involved. Bandeco began to respond, but because of the way the banana trade was structured, prices were driven down and companies had to reduce production costs, because of the way they were

financed (owned), and so the Macro-Agreement failed. At the time of writing it was difficult to say whether the international framework agreement would fare any better. To make it work a company would need to invest time and resources in communicating, implementing and policing their policy internally. The companies would not necessarily want to do this if it was not a cost being borne by their competitors also. So perhaps it might only work if all the banana companies made an equivalent investment in implementing change. Measuring this equivalence of effort would be difficult and, if the IUF did decide to renounce the agreement with a particular company that was not investing enough in the change process, what sanction would it really have? This would depend entirely on the position of the retailers. Meanwhile the producers in Ecuador were not covered by these initiatives and were producing cheaper bananas that would have increasing access to the EU market over the coming years.

Given these uncertainties, the campaigners decided to do what they do best, and keep up the pressure. In 1999, Euroban organised a postcard campaign in 5 different countries related to the 100th anniversary of Chiquita. As part of this campaign, in the UK, BananaLink asked supporters to send postcards to the supermarkets Asda and Tesco, complaining about workers' rights on Chiquita's plantations. "I had 500 postcards dumped on my desk" Asda's environmental manager at the time, Paul Bowtell told me, "it was like Arrh! Knee-jerk reaction internally. What do we do?" (1999, pers com). "Our first focus [on ethical trading issues] was going to be clothing but we have now prioritised bananas and Chiquita because of the postcard campaign" (ibid). The instigators of the campaign believed it was beginning to influence Chiquita's relationship with stakeholders. "A key reason for the opening of Chiquita... is the influence of Colsiba and Euroban", argued union leader Gilbert Bermudez (1999b, pers com). Alistair Smith (1999, pers com) concurred:

> *Chiquita has always had an aggressive, not engaging, attitude to criticism but now, with the level of pressure, and the fact they are losing market share hand over fist, there are signs of some movement.*

Where this kind of 'opening up' from corporations led to is the subject of the following chapters.

CHAPTER EIGHT. Banana Drama: Promoting Change in Business through the Ethical Trading Initiative.

June 18th 1999 was a big day for me. The leaders of world's richest nation-states were meeting at the G8 Summit in Germany. To coincide with this, activists in Europe, North, Central and South America, East Asia and Australasia, descended on stock exchanges and banks to protest against the dangers of global capitalism on over-drive.[124] Having been in Birmingham, Britain, to protest at the previous G8 Summit, taking part in the first-ever global action during May 16-20th 1998, I had wanted to be in London for the J18 Stop the City Carnival. The week before, however, one of my interviewees told me he was inviting activists from Britain and Central America and an officer from an international trade union secretariat, to meet with him, representatives of Chiquita and consultants from the commercial auditing company, SGS. The topic of the meeting? How to resolve the complaints being made about labour rights problems in plantations in Central America. The meeting, at the Head Office of one of Britain's largest retailers, was going to be a brief moment when the civil regulatory networks and flows of influence I describe in this thesis would come together in one time and space. I had to be there. So I swapped samba and truncheons for shirt and tie, traded barricades for boardrooms, and headed up to Leeds for my only little J18.

The following day, what media coverage there was of the protests in London, scorned the activists for achieving nothing with their disruptive tactics. Yet, out of sight, such seemingly pointless and impotent activism was having an effect. The fact that the Asda meeting took place illustrates the power civil groups had by using simple tactics such as a postcard campaign that targeted a corporation's reputation. However, the effectiveness of such 'pester power' to change corporate policy and practice depended on another step in the civil regulatory process - how the retailer would respond. That response would bring into play the role of other links in the civil regulatory network, including the providers of inspection and verification services, such as SGS, and the civil groups already engaged in dialogue with the retailers, such as IUF and WDM. Therefore in this and the following chapter, I examine what can happen after campaigners move from forcing change to promoting change in corporate practice.

The Asda meeting led to the eventual formation of a 'Banana Pilot Project' by something called the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) to investigate the concerns raised by the activist group Bananalink and their Central America partners, but also to test the 'social auditing' of private inspection companies (see Chapter 9). The ETI was "an alliance of companies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and trade union organisations [in the UK,] committed to working together to identify and promote good practice in the implementation of codes of labour practice, including the monitoring and verification of the observance of code provisions" (ETI 1998a, p.1). In 2001, it had 24 company members, 18 NGOs and 4 federations of trade unions. They developed a base

[124] See http://bak.spc.org/j18/site/ for more information

code of labour standards and had piloted this in China, South Africa and Zimbabwe, before the work on bananas in Costa Rica had begun.

In the 1999/2000 annual report, the UK International Development Secretary explained that the "ETI was launched in recognition of the growing influence of business, and largely as a response to consumers' demands for business to take proper account of the conditions and environments of all the workers involved in their supply chain" (Short 2000, p.1). In this chapter, I will trace back how the ETI came to be, what it aimed to do and what it had achieved, reflecting on what this tells us about the influence of civil society on business in the global economy for our common good. The ETI Pilot Project promised to be yet another 'banana drama' in a troubled and contested trade sector. By 2002, it was not certain whether this drama would turn out to be a romance, tragedy or disaster for stakeholders in the banana trade and beyond. I attempted to understand the likely outcome by analysing the processes of interaction between different civil groups and businesses and assessing the various types of power at play in the ETI.

Why it Happened

The ETI shared similar origins to the various multi-sectoral partnerships that I had been involved in or researching since 1995. Specifically, a deregulatory policy discourse at the national level (both North and South), subjugation of social and environmental policy making at the intergovernmental level to the agendas of the Bretton Woods institutions, the growing buying power of Western companies, the increasing investments in and recognition of corporate brands, the growth in information and communication technology, the growth of civil group membership and profile in the West and last but not least, seemingly intractable social and environmental problems (Bendell 2000c, Chapter 2; Murphy and Bendell 1999; Murphy and Bendell 1997b). These factors worked both on organisations in the private sector and those in the civil sector. For civil society, the changes were closing doors on certain forms of campaigning, such as lobbying government, while opening other doors, such as the lobbying of companies. For companies these factors were creating new commercial threats and opportunities, as well as waking their staff up to their responsibility for a range of ethical concerns.

The ETI was concerned with workplace practices in less-commercialised countries, where many of the products sold by British companies were made, because of either a suitable environment or low labour costs in those countries. Labour rights had not been well served by the deregulatory policies of the late 20th Century and the increasingly footloose sourcing of products by transgovernmental corporations (TGCs) (Korten 1995). There was resistance at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) against recognising labour practices as a legitimate cause for countries to discriminate between products, just as there had been resistance against discriminating on environmental grounds (Ekins 2001).

Responsibility for *setting* international labour standards was given by the international community to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) which was established for this purpose. The tripartite structure of the ILO, involving both employers' and workers' representatives as well as governments, together with the technical expertise of this organisation in all matters relating to the world of work, had made it an authoritative and legitimate source of standards, set in Conventions and Recommendations. ILO member states were required provide regular reports on the application of ratified Conventions to the ILO. The core Conventions forbade forced and bonded labour, required the right of workers to freely associate, organise and bargain collectively with employers, required the equal remuneration of male and female workers for work of equal value, forbade discrimination in employment and occupation, and restricted child labour.

The ILO had no effective enforcement mechanisms. It looked at and commented on countries' compliance with ratified conventions but could not sanction them, nor discipline offending companies. It was reluctant to comment on specific companies, for example, dismissing a complaint about Pepsi Co's operations in Burma on a technicality that the complainant, the IUF, had no affiliates in that country -- this despite the fact that trade unions did not exist in Burma (Longley 1998).[125] The director of the ILO's office, Peter Brannen (1998, pers com) agreed at the first ETI conference that "we have no teeth," prompting someone in the audience to suggest that "the ILO's been around for decades and isn't making a big difference so lets try another acronym." That acronym, ETI, came about as a result of civil groups seeking some teeth to make labour rights bite. They decided to turn their attentions to the private sector.

Creating the Business Issue

In 1996 a number of British civil groups involved in international development started their own campaigns to raise the issue of workplace conditions in Southern factories and farms supplying British companies. Oxfam launched their 'clothes code' campaign, to get consumers to pressure the top five British clothing retailers[126] to adopt codes of conduct on labour practices for their suppliers. WDM pressured the toy industry to adopt and implement a code and CAFOD similarly campaigned on clothing and footwear issues. The previous year Christian Aid had received a positive response to its report on shoe companies like Nike and Reebok, and so decided to extend its corporate campaigning to supermarkets. It published a report detailing social and environmental concerns associated with the production of goods from Southern countries on sale in the supermarkets and launched a campaign for churches to collect till receipts and hand them into the companies with requests that they adopt codes of conduct. About 17 million pounds worth of till receipts were collected and one congregation put down a 4-mile line of receipts from the church door to the local supermarket (Orton 1999, pers com). A year after the campaign launch, seven of

[125] Subsequently, after more pressure, the ILO did ask its member countries to consider their relations with Burma, given the country's record on labour rights.
[126] Marks and Spencer, The Burton Group, C&A, Next and Sears Group.

Britain's ten largest supermarkets had drafted ethical policies and six had adopted a code of conduct and agreed in principle to external verification (Christian Aid 1997).

The retailers recognised that this pressured them into action. The quality assurance executive of the retailer Somerfield, Stephen Ridge (1999, pers com) said:

> *We have increasingly looked at ethical trade issues and our supply chain because of the campaigning of Christian Aid over the last 2 or 3 years. Their work, as well as increasing consumer expectations and media interest, has put this on our agenda. It's not an integral part of what we would have normally done.*

"The first Christian Aid paper in 1996 started us off on ethical sourcing" explained John Foley (1999, pers com), Head of Buying at the retailer Waitrose,:

> *Some of the distortions, especially, excited our interest. Their juxtaposition of facts about the Columbian banana industry and our purchase of bananas was worryingly misleading. They said 400 banana workers had been killed in Columbia and we bought Columbian bananas. We only bought apple bananas from Columbia, which weren't associated with this, and the banana workers had been killed in rebel and drug wars.*

Undaunted, Christian Aid continued their campaign and published another report with a league table showing how the companies were performing in implementing their codes of conduct. Christian Aid's Liz Orton (1999, pers com) explained that their aim was to try and make ethics a competitive advantage for retailers to pursue, something these companies were very uncomfortable about:

> *Before we published our league table we were literally summoned to the British Retail Consortium to face the supermarkets. We sat there and faced an inquisition: they wanted us to scrap the league table... Waitrose accused us of being like the IRA[127]. They said this was our attempt at divide and rule, because it would make it a competitive issue and divide them not unite them in working on this. But we wanted them to compete on performance against common standards and systems they'd develop together with stakeholders... We took the matter to our board. It was felt political for our director to return with the answer... He argued that it was Christian Aid's duty to communicate to its supporters what Christian Aid was doing, what the supermarkets were doing and what they could do, in clear and simple terms. And so in the absence of anything else we would publish the league table.*

The brand-bashing tactics of the civil groups had worked in turning a people issue into a business issue. *How* it translated depends on one's perception of the business case for corporate citizenship, as covered in Chapter 3. At the time, retailers expressed concern about how it might affect their sales. Bill Hamilton, Director of Public Affairs of the retailer Safeway's, told *The Observer* (Senter 1998) that ethical trading issues accounted for 5 percent of customer calls and Duncan Green (1998b) of the civil group CAFOD reported that 92 per cent of consumers thought that British companies should have a minimum standard for all their suppliers. ETI's information officer at the time, David Steele (1999, pers com) explained to a Costa Rican gathering that there had been "a change in public opinion in Britain – you can't separate the product from the condition under which it was produced." However, this did not mean there could be a price differential for ethically

[127] Irish Republican Army – the terrorist group supporting a united Ireland.

produced goods, just that consumers expected retailers to behave responsibly. As one corporate member told me:

> *If there are three factors influencing customers purchasing decisions they are price, price and price. Everything else they tell you in surveys is lies. But there is an acceptance from customers that we work to standards. Customers take certain things about us and other retailers for granted and this is beginning to include things like social issues in developing countries.*

Various aspects of the business case, such as staff morale, attracting high calibre staff, positive relations with national and local regulators, communities and investors were all mentioned by the corporate executives as reasons for working on these issues. Alan Roberts (1998) reflected this belief when he explained that his company, Littlewoods, "is involved in the ETI because it will hit the bottom line if we are not."

If we accept there was a business case for corporate citizenship then the response of these companies demonstrated the power of civil groups to define a specific action it wanted business to make and then enforce that action. The civil development groups therefore had observable *first-dimensional* 'power over' these companies (Chapter 5) through their tactics of *'forcing change'* (Chapters 3 and 7). The hypothesis of civil regulation developed in Chapter 3 is therefore upheld in this case. However, at the time of writing, the evidence of the business case was *not* so conclusive, as a number of companies had not responded to civil campaigns without this affecting their financial performance (see Chapter 3). Instead, it was the growing use and acceptance of concepts predicated on an assumed positive correlation between social/environmental performance and financial performance, the discourse of corporate social responsibility (CSR), that enabled company managers to take action. Together with the multifarious proponents of this CSR discourse, the civil groups were exercising a fourth-dimensional power to shape discourse in ways that enabled new ideas and actions (Chapter 5). In itself this power was not sufficient to deliver the changes in workplace practices that the civil groups were working for, as recognising the issues and making policy statements were only the first steps in a marathon process of policy refinement and implementation.

Demanding Partnership

Once the companies had responded by adopting codes they required consultancy advice and 'social auditing' services to help them implement their new policies. The civil groups had been discussing these issues in a joint 'Monitoring and Verification Working Group'. Fairtrade Foundation's director at the time, Phil Wells (1999, pers com) recalled that "members of the [Working Group] realised that there were big commercial interests in the development of standards, systems and services in this area, and that if someone didn't define the need for civil society involvement in the setting of standards, then companies like KPMG and SGS would forge ahead with their own services." Some of the companies had already begun talking amongst themselves about what to do, and the civil groups therefore began pressuring for a joint initiative. An observer from the Trades

Union Congress (TUC) on the Working Group at the time, Simon Steyne (1998, pers com) argued that "codes adopted by companies without partnership are not credible." The message was clear, as Paul Bowtell (1999, pers com) then at Asda, explained:

> *the businesses were told quite clearly that unless there was some kind of consultative joint drawing up of any standard that the non-business gang would spoil any party we tried to throw and would make sure that there was absolutely no credibility. So the deal was you either work with us and let us have some input in any standard you create or you're dead. You have no option on this. Gun to the head stuff.*

A number of companies who had existing working relationships with civil groups already realised the need to move forward in partnership. Petrina Fridd (1999) at the retailer J. Sainsbury's realised that they "needed buy-in from all areas to do this. If we had done it as a solely industry initiative it could have been seen as colonialist."[128] Therefore Simon Zadek (New Economics Foundation), George Tarvit (Oxfam), Phil Wells (Fairtrade Foundation), Geoff Spriegel (J. Sainsbury's) and Phil Mumby (Premier Brands) put together a proposal for the ETI and approached the British government's Department for International Development (DfID) to support it (Wells 1999, pers com). Unions were not involved at this stage and initially "companies were resistant to the involvement of trade union organisations" (Heap 2000, p. 116). However Simon Steyne of the TUC, together with some NGO staff, won the argument that the alliance had to be established as a tripartite structure in order to be credible.

Just as campaigning had put the issue on the agenda, so avoiding future campaigning made membership of the ETI attractive. "To get the board on board, I merely advocated that if we didn't want to be picked off like the wounded wildebeest we needed to join the pack," explained Paul Bowtell (Bowtell 1999, pers com) Christian Aid re-oriented their campaigning to pressure companies to join the ETI. They targeted the retailer Marks and Spencers, who then joined, and Asda. Their manager Paul Bowtell explained:

> *I started getting postcards from Christian Aid saying 'why don't you join', to which I sent a very stroppy letter back saying this is the first I've realised we're not members as we paid up and went to meetings. Now I get postcards saying congratulations on joining. I've got about 400 sitting on my desk. Luckily I don't have to respond to them. But whatever keeps Christian Aid happy I suppose. (ibid)*

The civil group also organised a postcard and e-card campaign for Waitrose. Although the supermarket was active in cooperating with an ETI pilot project and a variety of ethical sourcing initiatives, such as the horticulture web-based communication tool VINET, by 2001 Waitrose had not joined the ETI. Waitrose's Head of Buying, John Foley, explained that his company had a problem with the base code for acceptable workplace practices, which all member companies had to sign. As Waitrose's parent company, John Lewis Partnership, was an employee-owned firm, they did not think that freedom of association was always a necessary concern, as some companies would have internal systems of workplace democracy. "We have a considered opinion on what we

[128] It could be regarded as colonialist in any case, as I describe later in the Chapter.

are doing and why. Protest might work for some companies but not for others" (Foley 1999, pers com). I return to the issue of the content of the ETI base code below.

Despite the important example of Waitrose, the civil groups were quite effective in demanding partnership on the ethical trading agenda. Once again, therefore, we see that some civil groups had first-dimensional power, *'forcing change'* in corporate policy to create the opportunities to work on *'promoting change'* (Chapter 3). In terms of power, this meant that first-dimensional power was exerted in order to attain second-dimensional power - obtaining a seat at the table and therefore the choice of making or not making certain decisions. However, another aspect of civil society's power to induce partnership with the private sector was the growing belief that the different organisations – companies, NGDOs and unions – would each be able to bring complementary resources to the initiative in order to further the ethical trading agenda (Chapter 3). Thus civil society influence was more than a question of 'power over' business and involved the potential to access 'power with' business (Chapter 5).

Enabling Partnership

"In the 90s people in NGOs, unions and companies have begun to realise the opportunities of collaboration" explained ETI's David Steele (1999, pers com) at the meeting on labour standards and workplace assessments that I organised in Costa Rica. The opportunity to collaborate was a novel concept to a room full of companies and stakeholders, some of whom had only seen each other before in court, as I explain later. The opportunities of collaboration that David referred to related to the specific competencies of the different organisational sectors represented in the ETI that, when combined, could unleash new forms of 'power with'.

NGDOs were regarded by some to have brought their knowledge and networks to the partnership. In reviewing the ETI, for a civil society audience, Simon Heap (Heap 2000, p. 106-109) asserted that:

> *[Civil groups] have knowledge of, and access to, a geographic community or a target audience that will help fulfil business objectives, especially ones in which the company is investing for the first time. [Civil groups] are repositories of knowledge on issues, which the private sector could use... In agreeing to collaborate with [civil groups] on codes of conduct, companies can benefit from [civil group's] knowledge of many of the concerns of workers in developing countries.*

Sainsbury's Petrina Fridd (1999) felt that "[civil groups] are good at networking and good to bounce ideas off." Somerfield's Stephen Ridge (1999, pers com) noted that they needed "to learn more about the issues and [civil groups] have different types of expertise to us." In addition civil groups were seen to be valuable in performing a watchdog role on suppliers. Asda's Paul Bowtell (1999, pers com) noted that with "you can never be sure that what you have seen and what you were you told [by your suppliers] is the truth." Therefore "the [civil groups] provide the check against what our suppliers tell us." Stephen Ridge (1999, pers com) concurred that they "can link

with the [civil groups] to verify the details and have a map of the various problems that might occur."

Writing in the 1999/2000 annual report, ETI Chair, Yve Newbold, praised the civil groups for this function, in being "unstinting in their provision of practical experience and valuable information much of it on the ground..." (Newbold 2000, p.2). However, NGDOs did not build their networks to provide this kind of service, so they did not have on-the-ground contacts with the necessary skills in all the hundreds of countries and thousands of regions from which ETI member companies sourced their products. One manager remembered that:

> *in the early days the NGOs' and unions' offer was 'we'll be the check for you'... they were all very gung-ho about this. But when we started talking about countries it became apparent that their networks are very patchy. For instance, when we started working on wine in South Africa I expected them all to put their hand up and say 'yep we've got a guy there', or 'you need to speak to so and so'. It didn't really happen.*

Christian Aid's Liz Orton (Orton 1999, pers com) explained that because "different NGOs had to sell themselves in order to get a seat at the table, many probably overstated their ability to deliver through their international networks."

The trade union members were also regarded as bringing complementary skills to the process. ETI welcomed their "knowledge of working conditions and labour rights worldwide" (ETI 2000, p. 18). Looking back on 1999, the Chairperson wrote that "trade union members have provided much insight into [the ILO conventions'] interpretation and application" (Newbold 2000, p. 2).

It is understandable that ETI's public presentation of the complementary resources that the civil groups brought to the process glossed-over the problems that they faced in delivering. This was because the secretariat wanted to develop the notion of the partnership being a win-win for business in order to attract new corporate members. Rather than relying on campaigning to generate membership, ETI's argument was grounded in a positive appreciation that business could access new 'power with' civil groups, rather than trying to resist these groups' 'power over' companies. This indicates a subtle change in discourse between 1998 and 2000, from an emphasis on the demands of civil society and the potential damage of corporate inaction toward an emphasis on the skills of civil society, and the benefits of corporate action. Notably, there was little recourse to the concept of participatory democracy as a reason for convening stakeholders through the ETI. The members and the secretariat focused on pragmatic rather than ideological reasons for multi-stakeholder participation.

This case provides some support for the thesis of complementary sectoral resources that I first presented in 1996 at Cambridge Programme for Industry and ERP Environmental seminars, in relation to environmental groups and business (Bendell and Sullivan 1996; Bendell and Warner 1996; Murphy and Bendell 1997b) and which Steve Waddell expanded in *Terms for Endearment*

(Waddell in Bendell 2000c). However, this fourth-dimensional power of civil society appears to have worked as much through the discourse of complementary resources, as it did through those resources working in practice. There remained a major capacity building issue for civil groups as well as companies, and none of the sectors had sufficient resources to complement each other in an effective ethical sourcing initiative. However, by sharing the different types of information, knowledge and skills they were in a better position to develop this - sharing that depended on developing trust. The chair wrote that "much of our success to date has grown out of developing trusting relationships between our various constituents and we are determined to preserve that trust" (Newbold 2000, p. 2).

The importance of this discourse depends on our view of what can be attained through dialogue. One view of the co-creation of power through enabling discourses, discussed in Chapter 5, would suggest that such communication would be empowering for all participants. The influence of civil society through the ETI process therefore needs to be considered in relation to this perspective.

Communicating Partnership

Most of the first 18 months in the ETI's existence were taken up in the negotiation of a Base Code defining minimum workplace standards that member companies would then endorse and harmonise their own codes with. There were two drafting teams, co-ordinated by the Interim Chair at the time, Simon Zadek, and the first ETI Manager, Raj Thamotheram. The output of this process was a code that drew on ILO conventions, and bore striking resemblance to the ICFTU model code first published in 1996 (and officially endorsed 2 years later). The base code specified the a range of criteria for acceptable workplaces (ETI 1998a, p.5-8).[129]

Simon Steyne (1998, pers com) of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) considered the agreement of the base code "a remarkable achievement given the diversity of constituents involved." Simon Zadek (2001) reflected on the process in his book *The Civil Corporation:*

> *[I]t was a difficult process with serious differences between organisations involved having to be surfaced, worked through, and solutions found. At various stages, organisations from all four constituencies were ready to leave the table over particular issues, notably how best to handle the clauses covering child labour, freedom of association and collective bargaining, and basic income rights. In each case, there is little doubt that the negotiations would have failed if they had relied on the starting positions of the organisations involved. But at each stage, the representatives of key organisations evolved their understanding of the issues and the associated perspectives of others. Every organisation changed over the process, although certainly some more than others. This learning process... enabled the initiative to move forward to what most would see as a successful resolution.*

[129] This included that 1) Employment is Freely Chosen, 2) Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining are Respected, 3) Working Conditions are Safe and Hygienic, 4) Child Labour Shall not be Used 5) Living Wages are Paid, 6) Working Hours are not Excessive, 7) No Discrimination is Practiced, 8) Regular Employment is Provided, 9) No Harsh or Inhumane Treatment is Allowed.

Therefore Simon believed that the process of dialogue, reasoning and consensus-building helped participants create a new enabling discourse, as was documented by the existence of the base code. This belief in *fourth-dimensional* power corresponds with Jurgen Habermas's (1987) theory of communicative action. He argued that *adherence to procedural criteria during deliberations* rather than scientific rationality will guide decisions towards efficacy, justice and the public interest – or communicative rationality. [130] Such ideal deliberative procedures would involve "free debate and dispute in which the only legitimate force is a good argument" (Dryzek 1993, p.229). Each participant must agree to concur with positions that they cannot refute (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998). This deliberation was supposed to improve reasoning and by implication, was more likely to engender consensus. Thus it was seen to "deliver the most 'correct' political judgment possible" (Bloomfield et al. 1998, p. 5).

However, communicative rationality was founded on the notion that deliberative interactions can be egalitarian, uncoerced, competent and free from delusion, deception, power and strategy (Dryzek 1993, p. 229). Therefore, as I explore further in Chapter 11, many sociologists argued that communicative rationality was an unobtainable ideal, due to the various vested interests that participants would bring to any dialogue about policy options. Can we see the ETI Base Code as an example of civil society's fourth-dimensional 'power with' business through the shaping of discourse by free and open communicative action? No we can't. Instead, the ETI Base Code and the emergent discourse it represented was the result of a kaleidoscope of civil society's 'power withs' and 'power overs'. Let me explain.

The drafting of the base code involved 'negotiations' rather than uninhibited 'deliberations'. It was the result of an interplay of factors, including 'gun to the head stuff', as Phil Wells (1999, pers com) explained:

> *Some companies disagreed with the wording [on freedom of association] and wanted the phrase "or other legitimate forms of worker organisations" added after the piece on the ability of workers to join unions. However, the unions would not budge on this issue. As we realised that there could be no ETI without union involvement they won the argument and some companies therefore dropped out of the drafting process and have not signed up to it.*

A number of company representatives told me that they felt they had no choice on a number of issues, with one telling me "they got us to sign up to some really difficult stuff... some of those things are really, well... its not been easy." The civil groups did not budge, and the only aspect of the ICFTU criterion on freedom of association that was not included was the stipulation that employers "adopt a positive approach" towards unions, which was, in any case, beyond the requirements of the ILO Convention on freedom of association. There was a significant amount of

---

[130] He argued that reason is not a result of pure logic and science but is also formed through historically situated and subjective mutual understandings. 'Facts', 'knowledge', and 'opinions' are validated through the process of communicative reasoning, rather than by appeal to logic or science. Therefore 'truths' are seen to emerge not from the clash of pre-established interests and preferences but from reasoned discussion about issues involving our common good (London 1995).

learning between the sectors which contributed to a new enabling discourse for work on ethical trading, but the base code was a result of the power of civil society campaigning and the fact that industry was outnumbered two to one in the voting on important issues. As Phil Wells (Wells 1999, pers com) explained, "I don't like to think there are union block votes, NGO block votes and company block votes but it's somewhat like this". The fact that new understandings had not been reached is illustrated by one corporate member's assertion that "some of what is included is inappropriate [in the base code], such as the nature of the restrictions on child labour." Another manager said companies felt compelled to sign and were rushed into it because the British government wanted a quick resolution.

If the campaigning had not had such an effect, and if the ETI hadn't been balanced in a tri-partite fashion it is highly unlikely the base code would have been the same. Therefore we see how civil society's *fourth-dimensional* power was enabled by *first-dimensional* power (campaigns) and *second-dimensional* power (establishing the balance of input and control in policy-making institutions). In other words, we see that the efficacy of *'promoting change'* tactics relied on the existence of *'forcing change'* tactics.

Shaping Perceptions

The previous analysis does not downplay the fourth-dimensional power of civil society but locates it in the context of other non-deliberative processes. Through exerting a variety of powers with business and over business, civil society had managed to reshape the discourse of business in remarkable ways. In her speech at the Institute of Directors in July 1997, Clare Short commented on, and added to, this new discourse of corporate social responsibility, when she said that "much of the [British] business community now accepts the need for codes of conduct which guarantee minimum labour and environmental standards." The following year CAFOD's Duncan Green (1998b) noted that the key underlying principle in codes of conduct, and membership of the ETI, was that companies accept responsibility for the working conditions in their suppliers' operations, even when not owned by them, and that this was a recent breakthrough in corporate social responsibility. By 2000 the chair of the ETI, Yve Newbold (2000, p. 2) reflected on how "today, there is almost universal acknowledgment that ethical supply chain management is an essential part of any good corporate social responsibility programme." George Tarvit (Tarvit 1999, pers com) recalled that Oxfam's first key target for their trade campaign "was to get the leading UK brand retailers to accept more responsibility for their supply chain and the people who work in it. And that is actually quite a major achievement that has taken place - the change in attitudes and knowledge."

Oxfam's second objective was to ensure that corporate codes were in line with ILO conventions. Peter Brannen (1998, pers com) director of the London ILO Office, relayed at the first ETI

conference that their study of over 100 corporate codes of conduct found that very few referred to rights of association and that only a third referred to any international standards. Therefore the inclusion of these issues in the ETI base code indicates the power civil society had in instating these issues in the normal lexicon of corporate codes.

Thirdly, by mid-2001, my conversations with corporate members suggested to me that many would agree with Simon Steyne (1998, pers com) that "codes which are not independently verifiable are not worth anything." This was illustrated by the comment made by J. Sainsbury's Geoff Spriegel (1998, pers com) at an ETI conference that "independent monitoring is the best way for credibility".

Within You or Without You?

The analysis I've given in this chapter, thus far, might seem rather impersonal to a participant in the ETI process. People became emotionally engaged in ethical trade issues and the hope of a better world that the concept created. Many companies and their staff reassessed their values and decided that they *wanted* to act on these issues. For example, John Foley (1999, pers com) recalled that "we first started talking with NGOs and other supermarkets around a table when the Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum organised a meeting... After these meetings we reconsidered our value set; is this something we should do, is it in keeping with what we are about? We decided yes."[131]

Helping professionals articulate a purpose beyond the paycheck was a noticeable outcome of civil society – business interaction. In many conversations managers have talked to me about their personal reasons for acting on ethical trading issues. In concluding the first ETI conference, Simon Zadek (1998, pers com) therefore noted how individual managers had committed "to promote development and justice generally as part of their being a business person." There was an unpacking of the 'compartmentality' of business executives, where ethics and emotions were kept in the family or church 'box' and not in the work 'box'.

An early indicator of this was that different participants across all the sectors began to develop new personal relationships in ways that could be significant in the longer-term. After two years of dialogue, even campaigners in the more 'confrontational' civil groups, such as Christian Aid's Liz Orton, recognised the "sincere commitment from individuals in companies and [that] this is backed up to varying degrees by their organisations. We used to see these organisations as monolithic but now we realise that's not true" (Orton 1999, pers com). This new found spirit to help committed individuals move their organisations forward on the ETI agenda, had sown the seeds of a new

[131] Similarly, Petrina Fridd (1999) of Sainsbury's remembered "it was felt that this company had a family name and family values, so it was right for us to act on this."

social movement for corporate social responsibility. In mid-2001, there was already an increasing interchange of personnel from civil groups to businesses and vice-versa, creating a coalition of people who saw their role in an organisation as functional not only to that organisation and their own livelihood, but as functional within a broader social movement.[132]

Corporate Clout

My analysis until this point has been about civil society's 'power over' business as well as the power civil society brings to business and business people. Another aspect of the power relationship is the power that business brings to civil society – the potential of which encouraged many civil groups to begin campaigning on corporate issues. The consolidation of the retail market in the UK was key to the ETI's power. A small number of retailers controlled around 80% of the nations' grocery supplies and the IUF noted that this retail concentration had "given the supermarket chains unprecedented leverage over corporate suppliers" (IUF 2001).[133] Therefore, "for NGOs and trade unions, ETI appears to be an opportunity to leverage the resources and influence of companies in favour of improved labour conditions worldwide" (Heap 2000, p. 117).

By the mid-nineties, Southern subcontractors of European and US companies in the textile, clothing and footwear sectors, were already changing their social and environmental practices because of the compulsory introduction of codes of conduct (Sajhau 1997). Similarly, the 1999/2000 ETI report carried examples of companies requiring changes from their suppliers as a prerequisite for continued business. For instance:

> *A visiting Sainsbury technologist saw that the staff dormitories and wash facilities of one of their suppliers were of a very poor standard. When the issue was raised, the management were very keen to address it and constructed new living accommodation by the time of the next visit (ETI 2000, p. 15).*[134]

Not all retailers bought a large enough share of one supplier's production in order to demand such changes, which is why Somerfield's Stephen Ridge (1999, pers com) felt that the retailers had more power by working together:

> *The ETI is helpful because none of our suppliers are dedicated suppliers: we retailers share many suppliers. There's no point and no possibility of us all doing this separately. We need to see how we can tackle it together. We need to ensure we are saying the same things to our suppliers.*

---

[132] I witnessed this cross-sectoral transfer of staff over 6 years, and increasingly so through my work on Lifeworth.com's CSRJobs Bulletin (CSR = Corporate Social Responsibility). I developed my impression of peoples' values from my work and socialising with CSR professionals.

[133] The benefits of consolidation were paradoxical – in the same way that brands enable brand-based politics. The largest women's organisation in the UK, the National Federation of Women's Institutes, were concerned about the power of these companies over suppliers, staff and consumers. (BananaLink 2000, p. 6). I develop the concept of paradox below.

[134] Whether this was the priority of the workers themselves was not mentioned in the ETI report. My discussion below and in the following chapter develops this issue further.

Therefore, because of the ETI, many suppliers in Southern countries had become subject to the *first-dimensional* power of western civil groups, acting with and through intermediaries – namely the retailers who were being supplied. The role of the retailers in translating this power was key to how it actually affected workplace practices. Whereas it was possible to understand the influence of civil society on business in the West by looking at their direct relations, we now see that the influence of civil groups on suppliers in the South depended on a multiplicity of relations between the civil groups and retailers in the North, suppliers in the South, as well as relations between these companies. This complexity was acknowledged by Oxfam's George Tarvit (1999, pers com):

> *There's the issue of how we take what we understand to be ETI in the UK, that is increasing collaboration between trade unions, NGOs and companies, and try and take it beyond the UK. All of a sudden we've got to somehow engage with the equivalent partners in these countries, all with different histories, different make-ups, different perceptions and political positions, histories of having worked together.*[135]

This brings us to the relations between the ETI and the transgovernmental banana corporations Chiquita, Dole and Del Monte as well as their stakeholders in Costa Rica. In the following section, I chronicle what happened in the early stages of the ETI Pilot Project on Bananas. Much of the section describes how I tried to do what George Tarvit had identified as a key challenge - establishing multi-stakeholder dialogue. This was my civil action, or participation for our common good. I argued in Chapter 4 that to know civil action you need to take it and to understand civil power you need to try to exert it. The experiences I describe in the following section helped shape that view... i.e. my methodological theory developed before, during and after my research, rather than prefiguring it.

The Banana Pilot Project

> *In mid-1999, ETI supermarket members became aware of allegations of recent infringements of the ETI Base Code standards – particularly ILO Convention 87 on freedom of association – and requested the establishment of a pilot project on the banana industry in Costa Rica. The ETI Board supported this request and a UK project group was established. (ETI 2000, p. 27).*

This was how the ETI reported the formation of a pilot project on banana production in Costa Rica. Understanding how the project came about -- and then developed -- throws light on the flows on influence between and amongst various civil groups and companies. In this section, I describe my knowledge of what happened, the contributions I made and what I learned from that.

Looking back, the meeting at the start of this chapter was the opening scene of the ETI banana pilot project. Asda had brought Chiquita representatives together with a Southern trade unionist, someone from the international trade union secretariat, two campaign groups and a manager of a commercial auditing firm. The companies suggested an "objective" analysis of the situation be

[135] It is important to note that although labour standards were derived from an international process embodied in the ILO, this did not negate the need for stakeholder participation in work on ethical trading initiatives, as there was significant work to be done beyond the definition of broad principles concerning workplace practices.

conducted by that auditing firm, something I knew was impossible and inappropriate given my earlier experience and research (see Chapters 9 and 10). The situation changed when the new ETI manager, Dan Rees, adopted the banana issue as a new pilot project. A multi-stakeholder working group was formed to decide how to proceed in addressing claims of labour rights abuses in plantations in Costa Rica.

I returned to Costa Rica and decided to try and facilitate dialogue about codes of conduct and their monitoring, and with funding from the Aspen Institute I organised a seminar. I had three aims for this. First, to inform stakeholders of the latest thinking and practice in social auditing; second, to discuss the challenges of social auditing in the banana industry, and third, to propose a process which would move social auditing forward in a way that would be responsive to the input of local stakeholders. We invited members of companies, NGOs, unions, church groups, universities, and relevant government ministries, as well as two foreign initiatives working to promote better labour conditions - the Council on Economics Priorities Accreditation Agency (CEPAA, which then became Social Accountability International - SAI) from the USA and the ETI, from the UK. There were more than 30 participants on the day, including high-level representatives from most stakeholder groups. It was personally disappointing for me that after inviting numerous representatives and receiving 5 confirmations of attendance from trade unionists, only one participated, and for only part of the day. This was the first indication of problems ahead (Bendell and Miranda 1999).

At the seminar David Steele (1999, pers com) explained ETI's approach:

> *The companies are looking for valid information, so that if they tell their customers that things are OK, they know they won't be shown up. There is no point in saying one thing and newspapers saying another.*

David continued that, in consequence, the ETI viewed multi-stakeholder dialogue on social auditing issues to be essential. They were therefore:

> *committed to promoting collaborative initiatives in other countries.... ETI is interested in taking advantage of the potential for dialogue provided by the democratic traditions of Costa Rica, so we might help develop a methodology for verifying company claims... Therefore we welcome this meeting and the efforts toward establishing a multi-stakeholder initiative on social auditing procedures. (Steele 1999, pers com).*

David's talk illustrated how sections of the British business community understood the notion of the social construction of knowledge and 'truth': the ETI basing itself of the idea that participation creates 'valid' knowledge of constructed and contested realities (according with the concept of 'communicative rationality' I described earlier). This illustrates how the civil power of protest had begun to undermine technical-positivist assumptions and re-define knowledge itself as politically contestable, so that opinions of stakeholders should be included in commonly-owned systems for producing 'knowledge' about 'ethical trade'. Thus even 'forcing change' strategies could lead to civil groups exerting fourth-dimensional power, by helping necessitate a change in discourse that opened up a space for civil participation in corporate policy development.

My hope was that the seminar would create a similar multi-stakeholder space within Costa Rica, where dialogue could take place. Even though I did not think the pure notion 'communicative action' was possible in these circumstances, I hoped that, on the one hand, some new understandings might be possible, and on the other, some new compromises reached. Thus, my colleague Miriam Miranda, presented our proposal to co-ordinate a process for drafting a document which would guide the future conduct of social audits of banana plantations in Costa Rica, and then the wider banana producing region.[136]

Given the increasing number of voluntary initiatives, there was consensus of the desirability of working together to operationalise principles, criteria and indicators for the social auditing of banana production so as to resolve, where possible, differences between the criteria of SA8000 and ETI as well as those of the Fairtrade Labelling Organisations (FLO) and the Better Banana Project (BBP). Some suggested that consultants analyse the codes, and develop recommendations, therefore regarding this as a technical issue, rather than a political or socio-cultural one.

However, different people had very different ideas about who should do an audit. Union leader Gilbert Bermudez (1999a, pers com) argued that codes and audits needed to involve the local people and workers, not foreign professional organisations and certification companies. This struck at the heart of the way social auditing was being developed as a profession, and challenged some people's basic assumptions about independence and objectivity - an issue I discuss in the following chapter.

An intervention by Chiquita's David McLaughlin (1999, pers com) in support of an emphasis on multi-stakeholder participation was key:

> *You're right to focus on process. The last thing we need is another code: it will stay in a drawer. The unions are essential, if they don't come there is no point in starting. If these two groups [ETI and SAI] can get together then this is right, we don't want different systems, we want a system for any part of the world.*

David had been reading reports such as *Open Trading* (Forstater and Burns 1997) from the Monitoring and Verification Working Group in the few months before that meeting, as part of his

---

[136] This 'social auditing protocol' would be based on the criteria specified in the ETI base code and SA8000, but would interpret them within the context of banana production in Costa Rica. We argued this was important due to "1: the need to specify what the criteria mentioned in the base code of the ETI, and the standard SA8000, mean for banana production. What is healthy, what is clean, what is fair, what is discrimination? Only an open and transparent process of discussion to produce a consensus on these issues will allow for reliable audits acceptable to business and civil society, at local, national and international levels. 2: the need to come to an agreement on how an audit should be undertaken, including issues such as the composition of the audit team and the methods of investigation it should use. 3: the importance of agreeing acceptable periods for corrective actions to be undertaken by the audited companies, and the means by which complaints might be made and responded to" (Bendell and Miranda 1999). The proposal aimed to devolve standards interpretation while maintaining the principle of transparent multi-stakeholder participation in an independent process and demonstrating compatibility with the global standards. Our intention was not to create a new standard, but to support the effective implementation of existing civil society initiatives in this area, while recognising the importance of improved local stakeholder participation and control. The procedure was structured in a way to

work in developing a social code of practice for Chiquita's operations. When I interviewed him, prior to this seminar, we talked extensively about the way stakeholder dialogue had become important to companies in the UK. Before the seminar he had also read a report I wrote which covered the same ground as I present in Chapter 10. Therefore he was aware of the importance of stakeholder participation in CSR initiatives - the notion that democracy delivers efficiency, developed further in Chapter 10. Another participant who had read that report, the Conservation Agriculture Network (CAN) Director Chris Wille, also advocated an open and inclusive process. Perhaps this indicates the effect researchers can have on the researched, and the how disseminating initial findings can affect the researched, in ways that then allow a deeper analysis of the issues. After these contributions to the seminar, more participants from different stakeholder groups agreed that it was important that real and effective participation of each one of the stakeholder groups was achieved during a process of agreeing a protocol for social auditing.[137]

The Director of Standard Fruit Company (Dole), Peter Gilmore, said he would support the proposal if SAI did so. Dole had made a commitment at the corporate level to work with SAI on labour issues globally. SAI was the civil group regarded by Dole to have potential 'power over' as well as 'power with' Dole. This was because of their profile in the US and their operation of what appeared to be the only workable system for assuaging consumer concern at the time - SA8000 certification (Murray 1999, pers com; Rojas 1999b, pers com). I remember thinking back to my first visit to the Foro Emaus offices in Siquirres, when I realised how civil society in Costa Rica was not made up of independently well-resourced groups as it was in the West. Here was a company openly responding to a civil group thousands of miles away and not those groups in its own cities and communities. There was no equivalent to SAI in Costa Rica - there couldn't be, because of the culture, politics and economics.

The key issue was therefore how SAI saw its relationship to civil society in Costa Rica. It was interesting to hear SAI's director of SA8000 say that they would support the proposal if the unions did. Therefore it appeared, for one moment, that civil regulation could be an agent of democracy; that the power civil groups in the West were obtaining, from consumer, investor and staff concerns about the plight of people in the South, could be used to enable these people to change their situation; that the problem was not the fact that people in the West were upset, but that there was something to be upset about in the South; that the solution was not satisfying the concerned in the West, but the concerned-for in the South. Unfortunately, things were not so simple, and I will describe below how other considerations hindered the democratic impulse of certain Western civil

---

ensure a participatory and transparent process, which would produce the document within 12 months of its inception.

[137] This indicates how the opinions of some participants carried more weight than others, which reflected the reputational power afforded to certain people because of a variety of factors, including their professional position. This reminds us of the importance of meta-communication - the information that is communicated not by what is said or written, but how it is said or written, and by whom and in what context. I was not able to analyse this more closely because of my weak Spanish.

groups working in this area. It was already apparent at the meeting that Dole was not entirely happy with SAI's position, with one representative stating that "unions are not the only organisations that can represent workers; I want to be clear about that."

The difficulties and potential fallacies of multi-stakeholder approaches became more apparent after the meeting when Gilbert Bermudez (1999a, pers com) complained to me about the proposed composition of the working groups that would draft the protocol. I had suggested participation by representatives of all those who would have something to contribute, as well as those with a stake in the outcome of the process.[138] However, Gilbert said it was wrong to include Solidarismo in a process on labour standards as they were an enemy of real labour rights. I had included them as an 'NGO', rather than worker representative, as they had relevant experience and were one of the largest networks of civil groups in Costa Rica. In addition, I believed that they would need to understand relevant international law and recognise the role of unions if progress was to be made within social auditing, but also beyond.

In the coming months the banana industry continued to collapse, as prices fell to new lows and the companies reduced production. With my poor Spanish at the time, and no funds for a translator (I had already put some of my own money into the seminar), and Miriam in Europe for two months, I only used email to continue my contact with seminar participants. Oscar Bejarano and Donald Murray at Del Monte did not respond to my emails. Foro Emaus required more time to consult with their network, and much of their effort was focused on issues relating to the closure of fincas and sacking of staff during the cutbacks. Chiquita remained positive and we began to explore the opportunity of conducting a focus group with women workers on one of their plantations (next chapter). Meanwhile Dole were progressing with SAI and to my surprise Juan-Carlos Rojas (1999a, pers com) reported that they were no longer interested in the CINPE proposal because:

> *We have learned from CEPAA representatives that an agreement on reciprocity between ETI and SA8000 has been signed. In other words, if we certified SA8000 this would satisfy ETI. We are open to continue and engage in dialogue with you, CINPE and any other entity that has interest in analyzing social accountability standards, but we do not think that an additional guide or merge of standards is needed.*

Sharon Hayes, then Head of Environmental Management at Dole, explained that SAI had advised her that there was an agreement between ETI and SAI and that this was confirmed by someone who sat on both the board of SAI and ETI. I checked this with that board member who said there was no such agreement, and that it wouldn't be appropriate because ETI was established to investigate ways of improving labour standards. I knew that commercial auditors' inspections of labour standards were not yet credible to many corporate, NGO and union members of the ETI. It seemed, therefore, that the pressure on SAI to maintain its constructive relationship with Dole had led them to use partial evidence to exaggerate their level of mutual understanding with the ETI. On

[138] Namely: exporting companies or independent producers; ministry of labour, health or environment; ministry of trade or Corbana; Solidarismo or other community organisations; trade unions; and civil groups working on environmental, human rights or development issues.

one level SAI staff believed that they were ahead of ETI because they had a workable certification system, so that it might be just a matter of time before ETI had their own certification system or supported theirs. On another level they were working to their own agenda - to offer a global solution to corporations such as Dole, and to secure funding for their own projects. So although at the seminar SAI expressed support for the idea of devolving standards-interpretations to local multi-stakeholder panels they then focused on obtaining funding for their proposal to write a guidance document for using SA8000 in agriculture around the world. Might this illustrate a competitive nature of civil groups? Many participated on issues of our common good, such as labour rights, but did so for a mixture of goals, which included their own strategic organisational interest. In this sense they did not always exert 'civil power' - the power of participating for our common good - and probably inhibited the ability of other civil groups, such as local trade unions, to express their own power.

This wouldn't have been news to the local trade unions. There was a history of foreigners becoming involved in local banana trade issues with mixed results, one example of which is described in Chapter 10. The trade unions were therefore heavily skeptical of what people like myself could achieve, and how expert institutions like CINPE with little experience in the banana sector would behave.[139]

By becoming involved and taking civil action myself, to try and establish dialogue between companies and certain stakeholders who were being ignored until that point, I uncovered more of the complexities and my own assumptions. Based on my experience in the UK, I had assumed that academic institutions working on social and environmental issues would be regarded as independent and probably not elitist. This was linked to my experience of academics in the UK working on social and environmental issues, whose career motivations were rarely financial, given the fact that salaries were not often high. In CINPE the academics earned well-above average fees from international agencies, lived extremely well (they had maids, SUVs[140], etc.) and were more connected with the corporate and government elites in their country than academics in the UK. One professional and one social example illustrate this: the Vice-Minister for Trade at the time was a former professor at CINPE, and the CINPE professor who chaired the seminar was married to his wife by Father Claudio Solano, the director of Solidarismo.

Although there is a history of academics and intellectuals across the global South making significant contributions to social change, my experience made me realise that some academics do

---

[139] SITRAP's director at the time, Gilbert Bermudez, did not express support for CINPE's proposal, citing the fact that CINPE's Director at the time, Arlette Picardo, worked with the Ministry of Labour (something I didn't know - Arlette had not been involved in the proposal). It appeared that Gilbert Bermudez felt he could resist a situation where the trade unions would be just one participant amongst many, including Solidarismo, and instead persuade the ETI to fund a process with much stronger influence from the trade unions and none from Solidarismo.

[140] Sports Utility Vehicles - particularly expensive automobiles.

not have these underlying civil intentions. Moreover, people's expectations of a high standard of living coupled with unstable sources of funding can affect their orientation to issues of our common good. Some people are 'just doing their job' and won't participate *for* our common good, but participate *on* issues of our common good, *when* it is part of their job to do so. This indicates the importance of civil intent and personal values in understanding *civil power*, and therefore a methodological failing in my work for not focusing on people's values at the outset of my research.[141]

When Dan Rees and the new ETI Banana Pilot Chair, Alan Roberts, visited in December 1999, they no longer found support for the CINPE proposal. In addition the ETI had its own agenda as a research organisation. Its members wanted to know whether commercial social auditing could produce credible results in the eyes of a broad range of stakeholders. One traditional way of testing such a process would be to contrast it to a different process - i.e. comparative research. Therefore, alongside the commercial social audit, the ETI proposed a second approach that would involve stakeholders in Costa Rica more directly - agreeing on an inspection process, drawing up a guidance document and even carrying out inspections together.

Civil groups seemed to be accessing important 'power with' retailers through the ETI, yet the purchasing power of the retailers was finite, and not necessarily enough to compel changes in banana production. Therefore, over two years later, little had been achieved and various sources indicated that the patience of ETI members was 'wearing thin.' The ETI secretariat stressed that the international uncertainty due to the banana trade dispute at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) could be blamed for the slow progress of the pilot project. At the time of writing, in 2001, the secretariat said that the multistakeholder process had been "parked" with some of the banana companies (not all) saying that they were not prepared to work with the trade unions on an audit team. This demonstrates that companies could resist certain policy options and support others, in their response to civil action. Therefore the influence of civil society on business in a global economy for our common good cannot be understood without considering the way that influence is filtered. Civil power is - perhaps always - contested, and this contestation shapes the nature of the policies and initiatives compelled by civil power. Some civil groups were complicit in this process to the extent that they often worked with those policies and initiatives that met less resistance or more support. Those civil groups more able or willing to work on such policies and initiatives therefore marginalised others, as I describe in the following chapters.

In this section I have shown how the pester-power attained by civil groups through their dumping of banana skins on doorsteps and sending of postcards was filtered by the various logics of

[141] I did talk about people's values in the course of conversations before and after formal interviews, but the difficulty is that these were not 'on-the-record'. Moreover, it seems go against my own values to be critical of others' values *in print*, as this can be hurtful to those mentioned, and because values change all the time, yours and mine included.

organisations in the private and civil sectors. The nature of the commercial relationship between Western retailers and banana corporations was key. So too the relationship between banana corporations and civil groups such as SAI. The relationship between Western retailers and Southern civil groups was also important. How each organisation played in those relationships depended on a plethora of internal organisational priorities and personal opinions. The groups with the most to gain or lose from the issue were the least well-resourced and consequently the most dependent on the way other organisations decided to relate to them. I've described a problem with scarce financial resources for its resolution. Why? The macro-politico-economics had created a price crisis in the banana sector, which when combined with the hard price bargaining of ETI retailers and the profit expectations of banana corporations, left little money in the value-chain for improving labour standards. A hundred years of these types of buyer-supplier-worker relations did not deliver sufficient value to Costa Rican society to allow an independently well-resourced civil society to develop (see chapter 6). Therefore banana workers and communities in Costa Rica were dependent on civil groups in the West who had their own constituencies, funders, expensive office rents and personal lifestyle choices to satisfy. So why would they listen to a PhD student with no stake in their situation? Just look at where I'm sitting now - in a nice house, having the privilege of writing this stuff.

Perhaps surprisingly, people did listen and ideas did change. For example, one industry representative from Costa Rica used to argue that there were no problems with Costa Rican banana production (Zuniga 1999). In a conference in Germany on the rights of women banana workers, he argued not only that there might be problems but also suggested where the solution lay - in the West:

> *I accept that many things need to be improved. I have a proposal. Consumer countries must recognise that high standards of living cost money. We are in a situation of stagnation but we can not come forward because the costs would put us out of the market. So my proposal is that we need to work together, with consensus, and say it's not about buying the cheapest banana. We'd like to produce fairtrade but we need to sell. We need to educate people about the two types of bananas.*

When Martin said this it was apparent that civil power had expanded some minds in Costa Rica, but hadn't expanded budgets significantly enough to have a lasting effect on the social and environmental consequences of banana production. Could ETI member companies respond to this call to change the way they did business? Or perhaps the ETI was meant to distract us from this very question?

In the final sections of this chapter I uncover the downside of the ETI, and expose how the *third-dimensional* power of business was shaping the thinking and agendas of civil actors, and therefore inhibiting the potential for change. In the words of my research question - you cannot understand "the influence of civil society on business in a global economy for our common good" without understanding the concurrent influence of business on civil society. This is because that influence involves a web of inter-personal and inter-organisational relations so that when influencing

business, civil actors are themselves influenced. In addition I will show that we need to unpack the notion of civil society and identify who was and was not involved in these processes and how this was shaping the potential for change.

Delimiting Action and Marginalising Dissent

The role of the ETI was to "promote good practice" (ETI 2000, p. 5), yet the means of promotion were limited by the fact that the ETI was "not a standards body but [an organisation] for experimenting, learning and trial" (Zadek 1998, pers com). Other aspects of promotion were quietly incorporated, through reporting procedures that required member companies to show they were learning-by-doing. The growing notoriety of the initiative also generated an interest and expectation that promoted the member companies who were acting on the ethical trade agenda. However, there were no specific targets for companies to aim for. Referring to problems with sexual discrimination in factories in Islamic countries, one manager asked me "what's the point of crazy targets? For hundreds of years Muslims have treated women differently from men, so how are we supposed to change that overnight?" It's true that this was a massive challenge, yet by not setting targets it was not possible to assess the task within a time-frame, produce a plan and budget accordingly. Therefore, the ETI involved major retailers that had allocated relatively little resources to work on ethical trading. As one member explained:

> *I am the environmental adviser here, in fact I am the environmental department. Sound-sourcing is part of the environmental programme... I do everything from worrying about recycling the paper in head office through to worrying about child labour in Taiwan. I develop policy and strategy, monitor and in some cases do the implementation and do all the internal communication and the external communication involved with that plus all liaison with the multifarious different loads of people who want to talk about it.*

No wonder he quit. In addition to the absence of targets, the principle of applying the base code to all suppliers was sidelined from the outset as impractical. At the first annual ETI conference once corporate member said "we won't be able to apply [the standards] to every part of our business, but lets look at a part of our business and make a start." Others also indicated they couldn't work towards compliance from *all* their suppliers. The ETI base code had set out universal rights, but they weren't going to be enforced universally. The impetus for change could now be dissipated by the ETI, as companies could say 'don't worry, we are working on it'. In this sense it was instructive to hear one manager say that that "the most important thing about ETI is that it exists."

Meetings are indispensable when you don't want to do anything.
John Kenneth Galbraith

From the 11 companies that reported data that could be assessed, 13.8 percent of the aggregate supply base had been *evaluated* by the end of 1999, with only 4.7% of suppliers found to be compliant – and that by internal inspections, which are of questionable value in indicating workplace conditions (ETI 2000, p.11). In order to climb a mountain you have to take the first

step. With the ETI, companies could tell the public, critics and themselves that they were walking up that mountain. But were they just wandering around the valleys, surveying the mountain and pretending to look for the best route up? To be effective in driving everyone up the mountain, the knowledge being produced in the valleys by the ETI field laboratories would need to be translated into a steep path for improving workplace practices globally. However, targets for achieving this were *not being discussed.* Twin Trading's Albert Tucker (Tucker 1998, pers com) therefore wondered whether "the purpose can be lost while we deliberate in the ETI." Moreover, targets were considered *inappropriate to discuss*, because they were thought to go against the spirit of partnership and cooperation discussed earlier. A section from the notes I wrote at the first ETI conference, before I decided to ask a question, captured my concern with the collaborative mood:

> *This seems to be all about finding a common language so that the different sectors can communicate with each other. Its celebrating being able to speak to each other, rather than setting out where we need to get to and when. Key differences/issues are being patched over. Nothing much has happened yet but there's an air of self-congratulation. Kind of we're here and we're big, so wayhay!... Maybe the charities think they've saved some corporate souls, converted some 'born again' businessmen. Why are they so surprised to find that people are people?*

So I asked the British Government's minister for international development whether she would support a call for the companies to set targets for progress. I knew the question was out-of-kilter with the party spirit, and wasn't surprised when the chair decided to patronise me about my microphone not working, and then tried to cut off the minister before she could reply. But to her credit she did (from my notes):

> *What I understood from the tone of your question is that, well, I don't think we need bits of 'the system' hectoring each other, which is what your call for a certain amount from companies within 5 years, or whatever, is like. This is a* partnership, *we need to work on this together.*[142]

Work on what, I thought - being nice to each other? The power of the term 'partnership' to undermine progressive thinking, or mask woolly thinking, was a concern I had when working on *In The Company of Partners* (Murphy and Bendell 1997b), but what was a surprise was how campaigners could swallow this line of thinking. At the end of the conference someone I knew from a civil group said to me "Clare Short put you straight there." This from someone who, just a year previously, would have challenged and ridiculed the arguments of any company or government spokesperson that seemed to deflect action. Since her civil group had created the ETI and was being 'professional', ready to work in 'partnership'. The discourse of partnership was beginning to be thought of, and presented, as a paradigm shift in the relations between different sectors of society.

The problem with the concept of 'partnership' is that it both enables and inhibits actions of the participants in the relationship it refers to. Partnership should not mean that one partner can not

[142] I was not given the opportunity to respond.

demand something of another. For civil groups partnership should merely be instrumental in achieving a goal and not be seen as a goal in itself. As Liz Orton (Orton 1999, pers com) recognised:

> *Partnerships are a good thing, yes, where your aims are the same, which ETI has managed to identify so far, but our broader aims are conflictual and we shouldn't forget that just because we are doing some useful work together on one thing. The problem arises when maintaining the relationship is seen as the end: its not, its a means to an end.*

Because of their 'partnership', civil group members of the ETI did experience pressure to suspend all their 'forcing change' tactics with member companies. The issue arose with Christian Aid's publication of league tables and critical analysis of company performance. Liz suggested that making the supermarkets competitive on this was key to driving improvement and the Christian Aid league table was good at "creating pressure from corporate boards for management to get their acts together" (ibid). The ETI process did not add to this competitivity and most companies were not supportive of the publication of the league table. One manager said that Christian Aid "try to have it both ways" and that "you work with them and then they turn round and beat you up". Many companies thought that such action undermined trust. Earlier, I quoted the Chairperson saying that trust was essential to progress and that she was determined to preserve the trust within the ETI. For most corporate members I spoke to, the importance of trust meant they looked unfavourably on civil groups who pursued confrontational campaigns.

However, as Liz Orton (1999, pers com) recognised, for campaigners trust is either instrumental or it is misplaced. Supporters didn't give money to Oxfam or Christian Aid so their staff could maintain trust with the managers of multimillion-pound companies but so they could work on poverty alleviation. "Let's not treat these organisations too preciously. The supermarkets make a hell of a lot of money. They never pass their increased profits on to their suppliers" (ibid). This was not a typical view of civil group members of the ETI. Instead, most campaigners used the language of partnership, trust, dialogue and understanding when speaking of their work with corporate members.

The fact that they thought this way was understandable, given the inter-personal relations they had developed with individuals working in ETI member companies. Civil activists had been pressing for partnership in any corporate response to ethical trading issues that might be forthcoming, so when company managers responded positively, it was only natural for managers to expect respectful conduct from activists. Overtime, civil activists got to know company managers and understand, on the one hand, the difficulties they had within their companies, and on the other, what drink they liked and the number of children they had. Therefore confrontational campaigns were, all of a sudden, not about the companies Tesco or Asda, but about Fergus or Paul. Suddenly the recipient of their criticisms had a human face, and being confrontational now seemed somewhat 'rude.'

This is a paradox of partnership that has been alluded to in previous doctoral research on relations between business and civil society (Murphy 1998; Shah 2001b). The paradox is located in the fact that feelings of trust and solidarity inherent in partnership can both enable and inhibit social change. It is found in the fact that those same inter-personal qualities of respect and love that we seek for the whole world can be, when expressed within a smaller group, actually undermining of our pursuit of the global good. The use of concepts of collaboration, partnership and trust by corporate members was partly an inhibiting 'power over' the thinking and action of civil groups. This was one aspect of the *third-dimensional* power of business over civil society, shaping the perceptions of civil actors in ways that were supportive of dominant commercial interests. It masqueraded as *fourth-dimensional* 'power with', yet it was inhibiting, not enabling of civil action.

This paradox arose because the conflict in the UK, between companies and civil groups, was seen as the problem that needed resolution and partnership, rather than the conflict inherent in global supply chains where the power of British companies over global suppliers had helped drive poor workplace practices. By taking it upon themselves to advocate on behalf of constituents in the global South, British civil activists became involved in a group process that brought out the humanity of the participants in ways that then distanced them from those they were meant to be working with and for. In the next sections I explore further the problems with the 'top-down' nature of the ETI.

The conceptual implications for the research question are immense. It demonstrates that by collaborating with individuals in powerful institutions, civil activists risk distancing themselves from those communities they are acting for. It suggests that by influencing business, civil activists may themselves be influenced in ways that undermine their very identity as civil activists. It suggests that the influence of civil society on business cannot be understood without understanding the influence of business on civil society. It suggests that the very same human emotions that lead people to participate for our common good can then undermine the effectiveness of that participation. I return to this issue of the unintended consequences of civil action in the following chapters.

Colonials with a Conscience?

The ETI began as an initiative of British companies and civil groups, the only international participants being the international federations of trade unions.[143] Although the initiative was about the practices of suppliers outside the UK, British participants negotiated the objectives of the initiative, criteria for membership and the use and contents of a base code. In reviewing civil

[143] The reason that this latter group were included was largely because of the problems that would have arisen from accusations of protectionism if many British trade unions were involved.

groups' work on codes of conduct, Simon Heap (2000) noted that rarely did they involve their overseas programme partners or country offices:

> *It is generally driven from the head office in the UK where the activities, usually involving private sector collaboration, have gathered a momentum of their own. There is clearly a need for Northern [civil groups] to facilitate work to raise the awareness and involvement of Southern NGOs, trade unions and workers' groups in the debate and practical work on codes of conduct (p. 122).*

In response to criticism that initiatives such as the ETI represented a form of ethical imperialism, Simon Zadek (1998, pers com) noted that "the standards are not northern but global." The standards he referred to were those conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) included in the ETI's base code, which were (ostensibly) set by both Northern and Southern states. However, the processes of choosing which conventions to include, preparing the wording of the code, determining the objectives of the organisation and the requirements of membership were managed in the UK. It was a year after the ETI was founded, and after the completion of the base code, before civil members held their first consultation with stakeholders in the South. Simon Heap (2000, p. 127)[144] felt that there was "a lack of ownership of codes of conduct by those whom they are meant to benefit, and also by suppliers who are meant to implement them". Therefore, Angela Hale (1998, pers com), of the campaign group Women Working Worldwide, worried that the ETI was "a very top down initiative" and that actions were being taken "without workers knowing anything about it." Angela argued strongly for the need "to bridge ETI with the ways southern workers try to act on their rights" (ibid). From the podium of the first ETI conference Ebrahim Patel (1998, pers com) of the Southern African Clothing and Textile Union, called for a "southern discourse" and "to be shown that ETI is to strengthen the rights and voice of Southerners."

Since then the ETI secretariat began to address the problem of being a Northern-led process. As the example of Costa Rica showed, they realised the problems of mining knowledge from southern stakeholders, and began efforts to facilitate local multi-stakeholder processes. In the 1999/2000 report, the secretariat described "the emergence of local tripartite alliances, like ETI. One example was in the Western Cape of South Africa, where the Ethical Trade Forum, an alliance of producers, trade unions and NGOs, intends to establish its own programme and capacity in ethical trade in agriculture" (ETI 2000, p. 8). This was a more empowering approach to addressing workplace issues than that taken by Social Accountability International (SAI), which I explore in the next chapter.

---

[144] CAFOD's Duncan Green (1998b) argued that this situation prompted allegations from some manufacturers and trade unions that the underlying motive for codes of conduct was protectionism by Northern countries seeking to restrict imports from developing countries. A respected commentator on labour market issues in South Asia, Naila Kabeer (2001, pers com) suggested that the ethical trade agenda could be serving the self-interests of workers' organisations in the North. The dual facts that the ETI was funded by DfID and applied only to overseas suppliers meant that there was a possibility that it could face legal challenge by disgruntled producers as being protectionist. This might happen, for example, if a major corporation lost business because of the ETI and decided to persuade a national government to make a complaint to the WTO.

Local participation was, however, seen in terms of working on implementation or monitoring, rather than helping define the ethical trading agenda itself, which would mean Southern stakeholders prioritising issues, and including other issues, such as relations with buyers. The 1999/2000 ETI report (2000, p. 16) defined Southern civil group involvement in a narrow way expressing their aim to "engage with [civil groups] active in the production locally, who can assist identifying and resolving non-compliances". Two years previously Ebrahim Patel (1998, pers com) had already argued to a packed audience that "even with the best intentions the model of the imposition of standards and rules... is not acceptable... we want joint ownership of any initiatives... this is the best form of empowerment." At the same conference Man-Kwun Chan (1998, pers com), then with the Natural Resources Institute (NRI), argued that "involvement should not only be at the implementation stage but with setting standards, locally if not internationally." It is important to unpack the concepts of 'involvement' and 'participation'. Sherry Arnstein (1969) developed a ladder of participation, which I re-worked in the context of CSR (Bendell 2000c) to show that an individual or organisation's desire for participation or dialogue can range from manipulation all the way up to democracy, or 'citizen control'. Although more progressive than many initiatives on ethical trading, the ETI's approach to Southern stakeholder participation was near the bottom of this ladder, seeing local stakeholder participation as instrumental for implementation, rather than important to governing the process.

This is not to say that all civil groups viewed their relationship with Southern groups in this way. The small Central America Women's Network (CAWN) participated in the ETI "only because our partner organisations in Central America want us to be in it" (Prieto 2001), and in all their dealings with companies they aimed to serve the interests of their partner organisations in the South. Some larger civil members of the ETI (ETI 2000, p. 22) recognised the dilemma of a top-down approach and stated their intention to work toward "improved localisation of the ETI agenda in supplier countries". As Oxfam's Sumi Dhanarajan (2000, pers com) said, "we want to get away from 'this-is-my-code-of-conduct-now-do-it'." However, in the following section I will show that there were some aspects of the agenda that could not be localised easily, given the way that the ETI was established and how it defined the very location of ethical issues in the supply chain.

This section has illustrated the *second-dimensional* power that some civil groups could exercise over other civil groups, by excluding them from policy making institutions and serves as a reminder that civil society is a variegated grouping of participants and participations that access different types and degrees of power. Therefore, in considering the research question "what is the influence of civil society on business" we need to ask "what civil society". Given the paradox of partnership mentioned above, the exclusive involvement of *British* civil groups in the ETI meant civil activists were distancing themselves from the concerns of the constituencies they were meant to be serving. The following section illustrates this by demonstrating how participants in the ETI

were elaborating an agenda and a course of action that excluded certain ways of looking and acting on the root causes of poor workplace practices.

Ethical Trading: 'Over There' or 'Over Here'?

For many years 'business ethics' was stuck in the optional-module ghetto of MBAs[145] and management degrees. My own reading of academic texts labelling themselves as 'business ethics' suggests that the discipline was shaped by philosophers who had skipped into management studies, and who tended to focus on the personal dilemmas of individual managers, rather than broader processes of ethical organisations, trading relationships, and market economies (for example, Chryssides and Kaler 1996). The term 'ethical trading' was a more recent creation. It was used as a generic term that encompassed a variety of initiatives, which apply sets of environmental and social values to aspects of the production and marketing process, in order to respect the needs of producer, consumer, retailer and other affected parties (DfID 1998; NRI 1998). By adopting the name '*Ethical Trading* Initiative' the ETI defined ethical trading issues as the social issues in the workplaces of companies in the South. In this section I discuss the importance of this use of terminology.

To a rather bewildered audience at the first ETI conference, Twin Trading's Albert Tucker (1998, pers com) asked "what is *our* code of conduct, for *our* behaviour? What would Southerners tell us about *our* behaviour?" I'm glad I wrote his comment down, even though at the time I didn't know what he meant. He just said it with such conviction that I felt it had to mean something. I now realise that I didn't understand because my perception of ethical trade had been shaped by the way that the people on the podium had defined the term. My understanding was inhibited by the power that language has over thought-potential. Now I have done some more digging, research and reflection I'm able to break the spell of their definition and recognise the power relations at play through the use of terminology in the ETI.

For decades primary marketing organisations had controlled access to markets and therefore driven hard bargains with producers (see chapter 3), and with the consolidation of retailing in the UK, major retailers were squeezing primary marketing organisations, with the aim of maximising profits and share value. The result had been small and falling margins for Southern producers, which created the conditions for poor workplace practices. However, the ETI defined ethical trading issues to be 'over there' in supplier countries such as Costa Rica and, more importantly, suggested that the solutions to ethical trading issues could be found 'over there.' This deflected attention from supply chain relations that fundamentally disadvantaged Southern producers because of their lack of a variety of channels to access Northern markets. In this way the ETI seemed to focus on the symptoms and not the causes of poor workplace practices.

[145] Master of Business Administration.

The director of the social auditing non-profit organisation Verite, Heather White, argued that price was often such a tough specification that suppliers working under codes of practice could not meet the contracts, so buyers looked elsewhere. She also pointed out that many orders were placed in a haphazard fashion, so suppliers had to do lots of work in spurts so the code went "out the window ...Thus we're not talking about codes we're talking about the style of purchasing and supply" (White 1998). She argued that suppliers wanted non-punitive, collaborative, incentivised partnerships with buyers. Normal pricing practices and shipment scheduling fundamentally contradicted ethical codes, which stipulated a 48-hour working week, for instance (ibid). Heather noted one, not unusual, case where "workers suffered abuse at the hands of supervisors who received cash bonuses to meet pushing 'just-in-time' requests" (in ETI 1998b). Who was to blame? The supervisor, the boss who gave him the bonuses, the buyer who made the just-in-time request, or perhaps his boss, or perhaps the retailer who was driving a hard bargain with their supplier? Or perhaps it's the shareholders. And does that mean we, with our bank accounts, savings and pensions have been to blame? The ETI made these questions an irrelevance by putting the focus 'over there', not 'over here.'

The problems were greater for small producers. "There is a danger with the ETI that it will encourage companies to work with fewer big suppliers and so small suppliers will be marginalised" said David Auld (1999, pers com) of Anti-Slavery International, who worked on code monitoring and verification as managers of the Rugmark label. His fears were not unfounded.[146] The 1999/2000 ETI report showed the retailers expected to have almost 50% fewer suppliers in the year 2000 (ETI 2000, p.12). This was not an anomaly but a result of the implementation of new management thinking on supplier relations, as illustrated by a key corporate speaker at ETI's first conference:

> *We have 2400 suppliers worldwide in 40 countries. We would need an army to work on that. Therefore we will reduce our suppliers... and thereby increase our power and create closer relationships. This will increase our margins and therefore allow ethical trading.*

Instead of the problem being framed in terms of the Western corporations' power over Southern suppliers, the ETI promoted a framing of the issue that regarded an increase in that power as a solution. Moreover, driving down prices and reducing the margins of Southern producers was seen as a means of solving workplace problems, rather than a key cause of those problems. This

---

[146] In their research on this subject NRI identified small holders' lack of negotiating power with those above them in the supply chain. This meant they were often paid late, didn't know what price they would obtain for their product, and so on. NRI noted that ethical standards were only applied to producers and exporters, and wondered if other stakeholders in the supply chain would be "prepared to change their ways, and be held accountable for their performance?" (NRI 1999b, p. 8/2). The ethical trade agenda, as defined above, deflected attention from this, so that companies did not consider their sourcing practices to be an issue. Instead, the buying staff of retailers worked "hard at getting the best products at the best price" and they were judged and rewarded depending on how well they performed at this (Ridge 1999, pers com). As fairtrade products required a significant change in buyer-supplier relations they therefore had limited market penetration. One manager explained he had "looked at fairtrade bananas. The problem with bananas is that they are perishable and the supply is changeable. This means we would have to pay upfront for a product which might not materialise, and

approach to 'ethical trade' regarded it as something which retailers in the West had to spend money on, through supply chain inspections, for example. This reminds me of the argument some managers made that their companies needed to continue consuming resources and polluting in order to generate the profits to pay for fixing the environment. End-of-pipe environmentalism, it was called. Seeking to deal with social problems once you've profited from them is illogical - a form of end-of-pipe ethics. As I argued in Chapter 3, corporate social responsibility (CSR) was argued to be different from corporate philanthropy, as it concerned how companies made their money rather than the nice things they did with it afterwards. The end-of-pipe ethics practiced by ETI member companies casts doubt on this aspect of the CSR story.

This analysis undermines the assertion of ETI's non-corporate members that one of the major successes of the initiative had been to make retailers accept responsibility for social issues in their supply chain. This acceptance of responsibility was only partial. Companies had accepted that they had some power to require suppliers to improve workplace practices but had not accepted that it was their day-to-day operating practices that were driving down workplace conditions in the first place. In other words, it was the same buying power that enabled them to impose social policies on their suppliers that was a root cause of poor workplace conditions. My own understanding of the term 'responsibility' implies an acceptance of *fault* if something is wrong. This notion was not expressed by any of the corporate managers I encountered in the ETI.

There was another silence in the discourse on ethical trading which allowed work to focus on the symptoms and not the causes of poor workplace conditions. The base code and its monitoring and verification failed to address the issue of ownership. Ebrahim Patel (Patel 1998, pers com) argued that the issue of "inequality of land and capital ownership" was "key" to improving the situation of workers. For example, the NRI reported that in Ghana, although young workers received the same wages on commercial and small holder farms, they received food and housing on their relatives' smallholdings, as well as benefiting from the associated social relationships and, after two years, receiving money for an apprenticeship that would allow them to pursue their own career (NRI 1999a). Therefore they found that standards like those in the ETI base code "do not capture the ethical priorities of smallholders, and may actually prove an obstacle to smallholder participation in export horticulture" (NRI 1999a, p. 8).[147]

My analysis in this section illustrates that what looks like prima-facie evidence of a shift in discourse due to civil action may disappear upon further investigation. What this suggests is that

---

we don't do that." Not dealing with these issues not only restricted the effectiveness of the ETI but also threatened to have negative affects on the livelihoods of southern workers.

[147] The Fairtrade Labelling Organisation (FLO) recognised that certain labour rights issues should not be of such concern to the monitoring and verification process if the factory or farm being inspected was co-operatively owned. By 2001, the ETI had not issued an opinion on this, perhaps because the issue of ownership was regarded awkwardly, given its overtly political nature. However, not considering the ethical implications of

all of my analysis of discourse in this thesis may be untenable upon further investigation. Discourse, which appears enabling of our common good might actually be inhibiting, and vice-versa. As someone whose thoughts are structured by language, and whose mind is shaped by discourse, it is impossible to achieve an independent fixity of knowing. We are trapped in mental manacles. We can continually reflect on and question our thoughts and gain insight into our entrapment, but we can't escape to 'knowledge'. Therefore, I will never be able to answer the question 'how was civil society directly influencing business in a global economy for our common good?' Instead I can question the question, the questioner, the questioned and the questioning, and achieve a form of cyclical knowing which is only ever partial, contextual, subjective, and passing. Applying this 'assume nothing, question everything' perspective to the emerging discourse around 'ethical trade' underpins my analysis in this thesis.

If that's Ethical, it's Not Fair!

When the ETI started there was some concern over whether ethical and fair trade were "potentially complementary or damagingly contradictory" (Heap 2000, p. 118). Christian Aid (1999) warned of the dangers if consumers came to understand that the standards of the ETI base code were 'top of the range' and chose to buy mainstream 'ethically traded' products instead of fairtrade products (see chapters 3 and 7 for more on fairtrade). By 2001, as companies were not marketing their involvement in the ETI, consumer confusion had not turned out to be a threat to fairtrade, but the changing attitudes and discourse around 'ethical trade' may have been a threat. On the one hand, the ETI secretariat argued that companies' involvement in the ETI had helped some of them understand the idea behind 'fairtrade' and become proactive in offering fairtrade options to consumers. On the other hand, some companies began to see that their work on ethical trading made fairtrade increasingly irrelevant. Bill Hamilton, Safeway's Director of Public Affairs, said that his company's work on ethical trading was "not about creating a new niche product or about people salving their consciences by paying a few extra pence for their bananas" (Senter 1998, p. 7). His juxtaposition of 'niche', i.e. fairtrade, and 'salving consciences', i.e. not relevant to producers, downplayed the importance of fairtrade. This view was not restricted to the corporate members of the ETI. One civil group member involved in the ETI mentioned to me another member was "still flogging the dead horse of fairtrade." This again illustrates how civil activists were susceptible to an inhibiting discourse, and then by repeating it, adding to its negative power. It was an inhibiting discourse because, while ethical trade didn't effectively tackle buyer-supplier relations, small holders and disadvantaged producers, there remained a key role for fairtrade.

ETI's definition and use of the term 'ethical trading' was therefore threatening to inhibit social change by deflecting attention from the root causes of problems in Southern workplaces, which lay in unfair buyer-supplier relations, and by potentially marginalising alternative models of buyer-

---

ownership was a political choice in itself, and the silence on this issue can be regarded as an example of the

supplier relations promoted through the fairtrade movement. How did this inhibiting construction of discourse come about? I argue that it was not the outcome of any one person or organisation trying to do this, but the result of commercial logic and commercial discourse, as I will now explain.

As I outlined earlier in this chapter, much of the impetus for the ETI came from the civil groups in the Monitoring and Verification Working Group (MVWG), who were working on labour rights issues and, as the name suggests, their monitoring and verification. However, they needed to ensure that companies would want to join the process, and therefore had to offer companies what they wanted.

In the late nineties there was conflict between business and a variety of civil groups on a range of social and environmental issues relating to various product lines: from child labour in toy factories to pesticides on pineapple plantations, and from the treatment of livestock to the use of genetically modified soya. As I have argued in previous chapters, the business case for working on these issues was mostly engineered by these civil groups, through their campaigning, and so the business solution was seen to come from working with these civil groups. The immediate business problem was to prevent reputation-damaging stories in the media. Hence companies wanted a facility that would allow them to work with a range of civil groups on a systematic and managed basis - to be proactive rather than reactive. Although it was only looking at labour rights, the name "Ethical Trading Initiative" was suitably broad to address the broader reputational issues.

The corporations were not the only wheelers and dealers of brands, as the civil groups themselves wanted a catchy initiative to tell their supporters about. A 'Workplace Standards Initiative' just wouldn't have sounded right. So civil regulatory initiatives like the ETI need to be well-branded. This meant that the biggest-sounding name had to be chosen for the biggest brand impact. This parallels an experience I had with a certification system a couple of years earlier. In early 1996, I worked for WWF-International examining whether a certification scheme might be able to promote more sustainable fishing practices. I remember when I sent an email to the director of the Endangered Seas Campaign, Michael Sutton, suggesting the name 'Marine Stewardship Council' for the initiative, it was because I thought 'marine' sounded somewhat grand and that it would have immediate brand recognition within our networks due to the already well-known accreditation organisation – the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Some people at WWF who were working on marine pollution issues objected and suggested we use something like 'Fishery Stewardship Council'. But that would have meant the same acronym – FSC. A more accurate name might have been the 'Responsible Fishery Accreditation Organisation'. But we lived in the time of the brand, and that name sounded boring. This illustrates how the commercial logic and discourse of our branded society affected the way we tried to 'sell' our policy initiatives. *Commercial logic*, because

inhibiting power of the commercial interests represented in the ETI.

we knew we needed to achieve good name recognition to maximise people's awareness; this name was going to appear in corporate brochures and on products, afterall. *Commercial discourse*, because in 'brandland' we tended to think that image was everything. In the same way it was the commercial logic and discourse that many of us shared and reproduced that was responsible for the inhibiting use of the term 'ethical trading' by the ETI.[148]

This illustrates a problem civil actors had in promoting our common good through provoking and then partnering business directly, rather than through state and intergovernmental mechanisms. To succeed in changing corporate practice directly, without state regulation, civil activists needed to help create a business case for corporations taking 'voluntary' action. It had to pay - or be thought to pay in some way. Therefore just small steps forward on one product line or for one social or environmental issue needed to be sold to customers, investors, staff, communities, regulators and critics as being significant. Even though the ETI was not promoted to the consumers of retailers' products it was promoted to consumers of retailers' reputations - investors, staff, communities, regulators, critics, and the small percentage of concerned consumers. Civil regulation therefore threatened a world of oversold policy initiatives that could stunt the potential for real change.

This is another aspect to the paradox of partnership. While partnerships supported our common good in some ways, their existence seemed to undermine the potential for more significant change. The influence of civil society on business for our common good is therefore paradoxical, as successfully exerting civil power can undermine potential civil power. By moving my Knight to check an opponent's King, I forgo the potential for moving my Queen to checkmate that King. The problem is that society is more complicated than chess and there are an infinite number of moves. Therefore the range of potential moves, the potential civil power, is unknown - and unknowable. We are into the realm of infinite what-ifs.

I discussed the findings of this chapter with Marina Prieto, an independent researcher and a director of the Central American Women's Network (CAWN), a member of the ETI; "some people have expressed concern that [civil group] members of the ETI somehow restricted them from campaigning, but I haven't heard people raise these issues you mention" (2001). Why were the issues not being raised by civil group members of the ETI? "I think everybody's too busy working on what's being done, contributing to the process, to think critically" (ibid). This illustrates that

---

[148] Simon Zadek (1998, pers com) explained that the name 'ethical trading' was strategic in allowing participants to look at a broader range of issues in the future: "ETI is here to look at labour standards, but as part of that conversation you may come to look at other issues peeking over the horizon." There are parallels with the arguments David Murphy and I made previously about how partnerships between companies and environmental groups on specific issues could establish a learning process that would broaden private sector engagement with sustainability issues (Murphy and Bendell 1997b). This inter-sectoral learning is an important 'power with.' Similarly, once managers opened dialogue with civil society about social responsibility, the 'compartmentality' tendency (leaving ethics and emotions at home and not taking them to the office) could be disrupted and a range of ethical issues might come into view. Thus inter-sectoral learning could also unleash the 'power within' managers to work on social responsibility. Whether this power then aids the common good, as defined in Chapter 2, depends on the way managers are able to engage with, and take action on, these issues.

once the problem-domain is defined, so it is difficult for people to escape its confines, and reframe the problem. A calender-full of meetings on the finer points of one aspect of the ETI base code's interpretation in a specific country, or an inbox crammed with the latest news from the pilot projects, for example, were important practical activities, but they also served as repetitious reiterations of what ethical trading meant – and what it didn't.

I am suggesting that there was a hegemonic discourse in keeping with Stephen Luke's (1974) conception of third-dimensional power, but that it is not useful to think of it as emanating from any one centre of power, rather it was created by commercial logics and discourses, operating through various individuals and organisations, and then perpetuated by routine practices. Therefore my findings provide a connection between Antonio Gramsci's concept of the 'hegemony' of capitalism with Michel Foucault's notion of power being everywhere, transiently existing in relations rather than being 'stored.' This suggests that although we can build on post-structuralist insights, the suggestion of some that discourse-shaping processes are essentially pluralist is not helpful in understanding the potentially inhibiting nature of discourse. Although the concept of 'fourth-dimensional power', as developed in Chapter 5, is a helpful conceptual tool for the analysis of power, we should not ignore the continuing usefulness of the concept of 'third-dimensional power.' I have found that civil power was susceptible to the hegemony of commercial discourse, because it fed on that discourse for its power. This echoes Antonio's feeling that counter-hegemonic thought and practice couldn't escape hegemonic thought and practice but had to try to use it against itself. I explore this further in the following Chapter and draw more conclusions on the analysis of power in Chapter 11.

The Silent Partner

The initial funding for the ETI came from the British government, but apart from a couple of speeches from Clare Short, the government was the silent partner. For a number of years, in my work and writings, I had been advocating that civil society should engage with business, because of a lack of government will and capacity to work on these issues. Thus it was interesting to see the British government funding this initiative, as I had regarded such initiatives to be important because of an absence of governmental interest, not important because of governmental presence (see Murphy and Bendell 1997b). Suddenly, facilitating voluntary initiatives had become a legitimate policy *choice* for government. British civil servant Jessica Irvine (1999) explained that DfID's Business Partnerships Unit aimed to persuade business to respond voluntarily to address social and environmental concerns on the basis that - I paraphrase - action taken voluntarily by business was likely to result in appropriate and sustainable changes, whereas government regulation could have been expensive and less appropriate. The fact that this view came from a government department indicates the internalisation of the questionable view that deregulation was

an effective governmental *choice* rather than something being *imposed* by the logic of global capital.[149]

At the time of writing there was an ongoing debate about the relationship between voluntary initiatives and government regulation (Chapter 3). It was an important debate, as the effectiveness of civil power in changing workplace practices through the ETI can only be understood fully if we consider its relationship to legislation. Simon Zadek (2001) noted that:

> *Initiatives like the Fair Labour Association in the US and the Ethical Trading Initiative in the UK are at least in part a route to avoid moves to establish labour standards at the heart of the WTO process, although the dominant fear is of reputationally damaging civil campaigning.*

But perhaps the more important issue is whether civil groups' work on codes was taking away pressure from governments to improve and enforce labour legislation (Green 1998a). Some civil activists were beginning to see voluntary approaches as the only way forward (Senter 1998, p. 7). However, Diana Melrose (1998, pers com), Director of Policy, Oxfam warned that "northern [civil groups'] work on codes shouldn't lead to them taking pressure off Southern governments: this is the worry of Southern [civil groups]." WDM's director Barry Coates (1998, pers com) also argued that "there are other things governments can do. We need international agreements, which are consistently enforced." Barry realised that there was an emerging business case for effective global governance. He argued that "these companies could get undersold. You'd think more companies would be going to the DTI and saying look at what we're doing, could you support us, and make sure other country's companies do the same? That's not happening yet." (Coates 1999, pers com).

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have examined the creation and development of the ETI to consider how civil actors were 'promoting change' in business. I have found that while civil society appeared to be having an influence on business, and indeed *with* business, for our common good, when exerting that influence civil actors were themselves influenced in ways which, at the time, undermined the potential for more significant change. As collaborative relations proved to be both enabling and inhibiting of our common good, I have called this the paradox of partnership between business and civil groups.

The secret of success is honesty and fair dealing. If you can fake these, you've got it made
Mark Twain

[149] This is not to say that governments could not devise regulations that would scale-up the impact, perhaps even enforce, the standards developed between civil society and business. A Member of the European Parliament (MEP) at the time, Richard Howitt (1998, pers com) pointed out at the ETI conference that governments could provide incentives to voluntary initiative -- for example, in Australia there were tax breaks for 'social companies'. "Voluntarism alone doesn't work," he said.

This paradox is also found at the inter-personal level, as it is the same qualities of trust and friendship that both enable and inhibit civil action. I experienced this paradox in writing this chapter. My ability to draw insights from the ETI process relied on the good relations I had with many of the people involved. Therefore, as my analysis became more and more critical I became concerned that it would upset those same people for whom I had respect. I discovered that my concern for good personal relations seemed to conflict with my desire and ability to take civil action. In the end I decided that whether I, or those I researched, got upset was beside the point - we were not being poisoned, or harassed or working 12-hour shifts. I decided to be careful in how I used personal communications but still make the same critical arguments (Annex II). This makes me question the type of research ethics I was taught on my methodology course, which focused much more on my relationship (as a researcher) with those being researched than on my relationship both to those people *and* to wider society. This was because the mainstream research community had the same end-of-pipe approach to ethics that I found 'in the field', where ethics were an add-on rather than a starting point. It also illustrates my argument in Chapter 4 about the problem of insisting on collaborative methods, as the emergent orthodoxy in action-research had (Reason and Bradbury 2001).

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that a multi-perspectival approach to power, as depicted in the power matrix (Chapter 5) is useful for understanding business-civil society relations and that we can not understand power by focusing on just one particular dimension. In the following Chapter I explore further the boundary between third and fourth-dimensional power, which also requires deeper analysis of the meaning of 'civil' in the concept 'civil power'.

CHAPTER NINE. Banana Nonstarter? Facilitating Change in Business through Social Accountability International (SAI).

In Chapter 3 I explained how campaigns on issues such as deforestation and over-fishing had led to the creation of certification schemes like the Forest and Marine Stewardship Councils (FSC / MSC). As these types of initiative were often the tangible outcomes of campaigning, their effectiveness in delivering the changes called for by civil groups would indicate the effectiveness of their civil power. Therefore, in this chapter I focus on one such tangible outcome from the *forcing change* and *promoting change* tactics outlined in the previous two chapters. A civil group called Social Accountability International (SAI) hailed the independent certification of company practices using a set of social standards, called SA8000, as an answer to the trademark trouble suffered by companies such as Chiquita, Dole and Del Monte. In the following pages I examine the workings of this certification scheme and find that during the development and implementation of this response to civil campaigning, the power of certain civil groups and actors was dissipated. Moreover, I find that this came about due to the dominance of commercial logics and discourses.[150] Therefore I uncover a paradox in how civil groups accessed power through their relations with the private sector, because of the way that this new power could then marginalise other civil actors. This is a chapter which I wouldn't ever have imagined writing, being someone who advocated a certified solution for everything from fish to footwear. I had helped devise the MSC and had advocated similar schemes for clothing, oil and tourism in magazine articles (Bendell and Murphy 1997a). I had suggested that these initiatives constituted an emerging era of 'global private regulation' (Murphy and Bendell 1999). Yet the research and experience I present in this chapter made me much less evangelical. Changing one's mind shows you're still living an inquiring life: in my case it tells me that I did learn something during the four-year stretch of my PhD![151]

Background to Social Auditing in the Banana Sector.

'Social auditing' was a term that meant different things to different people. I first came across its use in relation to environmental auditing in 1996. An 'environmental audit' meant an assessment of

---

[150] I could have profiled a number of other initiatives compelled by the civil action described in the previous two chapters, such as the internal social audits of plantations by retailers' own quality assurance staff. Retailers sent their own staff to plantations to assess the quality control processes of suppliers, and by the late-nineties had added social and environmental issues to their auditing briefs. However, I have focused on SAI and SA8000 as it was the most rigorous labour standards certification scheme operable globally at the time and commercial auditing firms were beginning to apply the same methodology to audit the ETI Base Code, among others. As my analysis raises questions about the 'best' practice, so it suggests there were problems with retailers' own supplier auditing and the auditing being developed by other initiatives such as the Worldwide Responsible Apparel Production (WRAP) Alliance.

[151] It may sound strange but I didn't really want to draw the conclusions that I do in this chapter. I had become an expert in social and environmental codes, auditing and certification, an area that was mushrooming and creating opportunities to work with various clients, keeping my head above water. But, hey, this was a piece of civil action-research, so worrying about one's self-interest was a methodological no-no. So then... time to bite the hands that feed...

a company's or a specific project's impact on the environment. This was distinguished from an 'environmental impact assessment,' which was used to assess the *potential* impact of proposed projects. Therefore I came across 'social auditing' as a term that referred to the growing interest in assessing a company's impact on specific communities or society at large. Variants of this form of 'social auditing' developed, some focusing on documenting stakeholder views on a company, such as those pioneered by the health and beauty retailer The Body Shop. This variant of 'social auditing' evolved into 'stakeholder accountability auditing,' championed by the Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability (ISEA). These approaches were distinguished from the embryonic field of 'social impact assessments' which, like their environmental equivalents, looked at the potential impact of proposed projects.

Another definition of 'social auditing' grew out of a process kicked off by The Body Shop, the global inspection firm SGS-ICS (SGS) and the Council on Economic Priorities (CEP). Managers of The Body Shop's ethical audit at the time, David Wheeler and Rita Godfrey, met with the managing director of SGS and discussed the proliferation of standards for aspects of ethical business and agreed that they "did not address all the issues of corporate social responsibility and there was a need for an 'ethical' standard covering all the areas of social, quality, environment, animal protection etc." (Godfrey 2001, pers com). After that Rita met with Keith Jones of SGS, "to draw up a format for the 'ethical standard'" (ibid.). After this SGS held a meeting of a number of companies at their offices, where it was agreed to move forward, with the proviso that:

> *Neither The Body Shop or SGS could drive it - SGS would be seen to be compromised as auditors and the leadership of [The Body Shop] would put off some companies (the 'not The Body Shop again!' brigade) So SGS invited [the Council on Economic Priorities] CEP in the form of Deborah Leipziger to take over the running. (ibid.)*

Hence 'The Global Sourcing Working Group' was established in London, coordinated by Deborah, who had already been conducting research on codes of conduct and child labour for a US civil group CEP. A parallel initiative called 'The Partnership for Responsible Global Sourcing', was coordinated by CEP's US office and involved representatives of SGS in the US. These groups convened companies to discuss developing a set of standards for a responsible corporation that could then be independently audited (the civil groups Amnesty International, the National Child Labour Committee and International Textile Garment and Leather Workers Federation (ITGLWF) were then invited to join this process). The group talked about systems for 'social auditing,' as described above, and some pushed for a focus on the auditing of a company's accountability to a wider range of stakeholders and therefore talked of 'social accountability.' However, over time, because of the complexity of the issues, the pressing concern over workers rights in the South, and the desire of SGS to hatch a workable inspection standard upon which they could base new commercial services, they decided to focus on labour standards in particular. The result of this process was the October 1997 launch of the "Council on Economic Priorities Accreditation

Agency (CEPAA)", which managed the new standard "Social Accountability (SA)8000".[152] Thus 'social auditing' now described the assessments of labour standards, and the term 'social accountability' distinguished the SA8000 approach from other forms of assessing labour practices, even though the standard was not about accountability to a range of stakeholders. In 2000 the renaming of CEPAA as Social Accountability International (SAI) institutionalised what was a rather awkward terminology for the inspection, monitoring, verification and certification of workplace policies and practices with various specified labour standards. I will refer to the organisation as SAI from now on.[153]

The SA8000 standard covered nine core areas (SAI 2001). The first 8 specified what a company should and should not do with regard to child labour, forced labour, health and safety, compensation, working hours, discrimination, discipline, free association and collective bargaining. The standard referred extensively to the conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), including the core conventions and their accompanying recommendations (see Chapter 6). The only difference to the issues set out in the ETI base code was that it didn't mention 'regular employment' as a key criterion. The final part of SA8000 referred to the management systems that should be in place to ensure a certified company upheld parts 1 to 8 of the standard.

In many different ways SA8000 was a significant improvement on corporate efforts at assessing labour standards in supplier factories. A number of companies had developed their own supplier codes, but few specified difficult issues such as freedom of association and collective bargaining (Diller 1999; Jenkins 2000). As a civil group SAI could be more aspirational and define what it saw to be a comprehensive standard, derived from international conventions. Second, as a non-corporate it could generate greater trust, interest and input from other civil groups to enable the standard to be updated as issues of concern arose (of 360 corporate codes analysed by SAI at the

---

[152] The original Advisory Board (as of July 1997) which oversaw the drafting of the standard and procedures for certification and accreditation, consisted of 19 members: Abrinq, Amalgamated, Amnesty International, AFXB, Body Shop, CEP, Eileen Fisher, Franklin (later Trillium) Research, Grupo M, ITGLWF, KPMG, National Child Labor Committee, Otto-Versand, Reebok, Sainsbury's, SGS, Toys R Us, Universal Woods, University of Texas (Ray Marshall).

[153] In 1998 a floor speaker at the first ETI conference expressed concern at SAI using the term 'social auditing,' to which Alice Tepper-Marlin, director of CEP, replied "that's why we talk of *Social Accountability* 8000." However, the standard does not concern the accountability of a company or organisation to society, and therefore 'social accountability' is an equally awkward name. The standard was originally going to be called SA2000, given the aspirational association with the millennium at the time, but when that was found to be registered already, SA8000 was chosen. This history of SAI is based on interviews with Teresa Fabian and Rita Godfrey, as well as my memory of events as they occurred. For example, I unsuccessfully tried to invite myself to an early Global Sourcing Working Group meeting in 1996. I remember the agenda and delegate list had no civil groups on it bar CEP - at that time. Three civil groups had joined the process, at board level, by the launch in October 1997. My understanding of this history was disputed by some SAI staff who viewed the origin of SA8000 as coming out of a collaboration of diverse stakeholders, rather than something managed by CEP and SGS. The fact is that the most well-informed civil group staff in the UK working on global labour standards at the time were involved in the Monitoring and Verification Working Group (MVWG) and did not participate in the Global Sourcing Working Group. Those civil groups regarded it with concern, as they did not want commercial auditors to define the practice of monitoring and verification: this led to them to set up the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) (Chapter 8). In conversations with me it seemed that CEP and SAI staff preferred not to acknowledge this was part of the reason that the ETI was formed.

time, only 3 companies had involved civil groups in their development) (Fabian 1999, pers com). Third, it allowed different companies and organisations to work from the same template, rather than each requiring slightly different things from their suppliers. Fourth, whereas most corporate codes relied on supplier self-reporting or an infrequent inspection from a buyer's quality technician, SAI required the inspection of companies by third parties (of the 360 corporate codes analysed by SAI at the time, only 31 had involved monitoring of some kind) (ibid). Moreover, before SAI there was no system for guaranteeing the independence and professionalism of these third party inspectors. By 2001 SAI had accredited a number of commercial inspection companies including BVQI, a subsidiary of Bureau Veritas, and DNV.

The fact there was a system in place to offer a reassurance that labour conditions in suppliers' operations were acceptable, which involved a multi-national commercial service provider like SGS and a respected civil group like CEP, generated significant interest. Director of CEP Europe at the time, Malcolm McIntosh (1999, pers com) contended that SA8000 helped to "put responsible supply chain management on the agenda for lots of companies... and it's forced them to look at specific issues." In 1998 Malcolm was involved in convening a CEP forum of companies studying these issues. Representatives of the major banana companies were involved in this forum, and began to learn about the SA8000 system. Dole made a commitment to use the SA8000 system for its global operations, and their Vice President for Environmental Affairs at the time, Sharon Hayes, joined SAI's board. The first agricultural operation in the world to be certified to SA8000 was Pascual Hermanos, a majority owned Dole subsidiary in Spain (Dole 2000). Waitrose's John Foley (1999, pers com) said that the British banana importers and distributors had "set their heart on SA8000." Del Monte's Costa Rican director, Donald Murray (1999, pers com), agreed that "as long as we promote SA8000 we should be OK." With Chiquita's mixed experience of the benefits of civil group certification from the Conservation Agriculture Network (CAN - see Chapter 10), they were more cautious, but by 2001 had made a corporate commitment to abide by the SA8000 code.[154]

In 1998, after consultations with SGS and three pilot audits, SAI approved the use of SA8000 in agriculture, with the proviso of an additional pre-audit visit, the participation of subject matter experts on the audit team and the inclusion of casual workers in the assessment process. The interest of banana companies in SA8000 was one reason why the SA8000 director attended the seminar on social auditing I organised in Costa Rica. In 2001, a Dole banana plantation in the Philippines was the first to be SA8000 certified, by SGS. By this time SAI was well established in

[154] An early indication of this interest was one commercial auditor's decision to hold a seminar with stakeholders in Costa Rica in 1998, and their use of a picture of bananas on the front cover of their brochure advertising their social auditing services. This led me to approach them, successfully, to fund a meeting of The Values Network on the social and environmental certification of agricultural products. With that meeting, held in London in January 1999, I brought together UK-based stakeholders in agricultural trades to discuss social and environmental standards. This was a civil action I took to promote multi-sectoral dialogue and learning on the issue of social and environmental certification, which I discuss further below.

the social auditing field, with well-attended high-level international conferences and funding from a variety of sources including the US president's office (Clinton Administration).

Other Social Auditing Initiatives

SAI was not the only multi-party initiative monitoring workplace practices launched during the late-nineties. Both the private and civil sectors were also developing auditing functions during this time. The member organisations of the Fairtrade Labelling Organisation (FLO) were assessing workplace practices in a variety of agricultural sectors, in order to register producers for Fairtrade (see Chapter 3). Meanwhile the Conservation Agriculture Network (CAN) was making attempts at auditing social aspects of tropical agriculture, as discussed in Chapter 10. There were other initiatives, like CAN, which involved local civil groups as monitors, but which focused on other industry sectors, such as textiles and apparel manufacture. In 1995 The Independent Monitoring Working Group (IMWG) was established after controversy over practices in an El Salvadorean factory, to develop an independent monitoring programme for factories in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Also in the late nineties, a specialist civil group called Verite was launched to provide monitoring services around the world, distinguishing itself from firms such as SGS, due to its insistence on having local professionals on any audit team.[155]

Commercial firms also developed social auditing services during this time. One of the best known was PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC), which had completed over 6000 workplace appraisals world-wide by 2000. By that time there was increasing criticism of the efficacy of the practices of this new social auditing, an example being a Panorama BBC TV documentary criticising the poor quality of PwC's audits of Nike and Gap suppliers. Dara O'Rourke (2000, p. 1), Assistant Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, witnessed a number of PwC audits and argued that "PwC's monitoring methods are significantly flawed." He suggested that social auditing could play "a positive role in improving factory conditions, but only if it is much more transparent and accountable, includes workers more fully, and can be verified by local NGOs and workers themselves" (ibid). Consequently he called on those who require assurances of decent workplace practices in their supply chains to demand better from social auditors. After this criticism Nike's Vice President for Corporate Responsibility Maria Eitel, said that the company would seek to use monitors certified by the Fair Labor Association (FLA) and review the effectiveness of its PwC monitoring and compliance system. In 2001, PwC's US department responsible for social auditing services closed.

---

[155] The IMWG was established by Gap Inc, Business for Social Responsibility Education Fund (BSREF), Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) and the Center for Reflection, Education and Action (CREA). In El Salvador, the IMWG engaged four local organisations that formed the original Independent Monitoring Group of El Salvador (GMIES). Their approach differed from that of SAI in a number of ways, which I discuss later. Meanwhile, Verite was the first organisation to be accredited by the Fair Labor Association (FLA) to conduct factory inspections.

Civil groups involved in the banana sector were also expressing reservations about the practices of commercial auditors. BananaLink's Alistair Smith (1999, pers com) stated at the Values Network seminar that:

> *The involvement of third parties through the accreditation and certification process is not necessarily a good idea if those third parties are not well-informed and not legitimate. First hand agreements between management and unions should be promoted and if they can't be achieved then the involvement of third parties might actually be a distraction to the real problem.*

When other delegates quizzed this scepticism he argued it was "understandable because negative corporate actions still speak louder than their positive words" (ibid). By 2001 the International Union of Food and Agriculture Workers (IUF) was taking an even more critical line. The IUF (2001) argued that what it dubbed "the code-of-conduct industry" was:

> *nearing the end of its shelf life, as consumers and NGO activists come to understand that public relations exercises cannot substitute for negotiated agreements between the companies and the workers' trade unions - at every level, including internationally.*

When I first heard these criticisms I felt people did not understand what certification could be expected to do, and what it couldn't, and that they did not recognise how it could play one role amongst a range of initiatives. I felt that the scepticism of critics was because SAI had not been able to effectively engage the various stakeholders in ways that would give them a reason for becoming knowledgeable and supportive of the process. The second reason for the scepticism, I thought, was the long history of conflictual relations. From my experience of the FSC certification scheme, I had high hopes for what social auditing might achieve, and aimed to promote multi-stakeholder dialogue and learning so the best form of social auditing and certification might develop. Hence I organised the meeting in Costa Rica, mentioned in the previous chapter, and the meeting in London, mentioned above. By taking these civil actions, engaging in and witnessing the dialogue of various actors, and researching social auditing practices, my ideas changed considerably. In this chapter I will demonstrate that the way social auditing/certification was professionalised by SAI distorted and dissipated the effectiveness of the civil actions described in the previous chapters.

Deconstructing SA8000 Methodology

In this section, I analyse the methodology of social auditing as defined by SAI and practiced by firms such as SGS. I do this by drawing upon my participation in an SGS SA8000 Lead Auditor course, analysis of the SA8000 Guidance Document and other documents from SAI, interviews with professionals working in this field as well as critics of it, prior analysis of other organisations' approaches to labour standards including the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), Conservation Agriculture Network (CAN) and Fairtrade groups, discussions at seminars and conferences (including the two I organised), and a focus group of women banana workers at a Chiquita-owned plantation in Costa Rica (see Annex II).

The director of SA8000 explained that they were "trying to professionalise social auditing." In 1996/7, when SA8000 was in development, members of SAI had no experience in the profession of management systems auditing so they relied on SGS staff to advise them on how to 'professionalise social auditing', and what could be expected from accredited auditors. Accordingly the systems for SAI accreditation and certification mirrored the norms for management systems standards such as ISO9000 and ISO14001.[156]

When auditors found evidence that the company was not compliant with some aspect of the SA8000 standard they would define it as either a minor or major 'non-conformancy' and issue either a minor or major 'corrective action request' (CAR). A minor non-conformancy was where the auditor noticed that there were "periodic, odd, instances" of non-conformancies with the standard: isolated instances where things had gone awry. A 'major non-conformancy' was where there was "a significant absence, or significant breakdown, or widespread non-conformance." An organisation could obtain an SA8000 certificate if there were minor CARs, but not if there was a major CAR. If the company had a plan to address the major non-conformancy then this would not prevent a recommendation for certification.[157]

In publications, presentations and conversations, SAI and its accredited auditing companies stressed their objectivity, confidentiality, neutrality, reasonableness, internationality, and speed, as well as their awareness of ISO approaches to management systems certification, as hallmarks of their professional approach to social auditing. In the following section I argue that each of these hallmarks of professionalism served to undermine the ability of the auditing process to effect change for our common good.

Speed?

> *With social auditing we're doing things we're not used to. It's less like assessment and more like research. But we don't have 3 years to spend on it, only 3 days, if you're lucky.*

---

[156] SAI-accredited auditors assessed companies conformance with the SA8000 criteria mentioned above by: research of the legal and social context; interviews with stakeholders or interested parties; revision of the policy and procedures of the company; meeting with managers; analysis of relevant records; questionnaires, interviews, or focus groups with workers; observation, and; a concluding meeting with management. The auditors then assessed a company's management system by checking for: a policy compatible with SA-8000; a named senior manager with responsibility for SA8000; a named SA8000 worker representative, elected by workers; procedures to control suppliers; plans to take corrective actions if they failed to meet the standard; effective communication of their policy with the community; an ability for management to verify their compliance with the standard; record keeping of compliance with the standard.

[157] In this chapter I refer to comments made by the three SGS course tutors at the SA8000 Lead Auditor Course, 12th- 15th July, 1999, SGS-ICS, Camberley, UK. I have anonymised their names as I did not agree with them beforehand that I would use what they said as evidence in this thesis. In addition, I am particularly critical of what they taught, but do not mean to personalise the criticism - they serve to illustrate the SGS organisation (se Annex II)

So explained the second SGS course tutor. Most commercial social auditing companies aimed to do their audits in 2 to 3 days, with a team of 2 to 3 people. This did not always mean that they had 2 to 3 days at the workplace. The short amount of time available on an audit was a result of the high day-rates certification companies charged, of over 500 pounds Stirling in 1999, coupled with the aim of not making the audit prohibitively expensive for the client. Moreover, SGS portrayed the speed of their audits as an advantage for clients wanting a swift solution to labour standards concerns.

In the 2 to 3 days, auditors had to cover a range of issues. To illustrate the size of the task, the SA8000 Guidance Document on how to do a social audit, which provided very general information, was already 67-pages by 1998 (SAI (CEPAA) 1999). This created major time pressure for auditors, which significantly influenced the nature of the audit. First, it meant that auditors sought to reduce the potential complexity that would be faced during an audit, in order to automate the process somewhat. "Ultimately we want to have a number of checklists for different areas of the world" explained the one course tutor. Thus the time pressure compelled a tick-box approach to auditing. When, during the SA8000 course, one issue was found to be particularly complex, the third tutor (and a key author of the SA8000 standard), reminded us that "you can't spend hours and hours on something."

The time pressure also meant that certain important research techniques were ruled out, even though they might provide crucial information. The second SGS tutor noted that "if people are being threatened they won't want to talk to you." If this was the case, the on-site interviews would not be sufficient. This is what the director of Verite, Heather White, argued. She recounted one case where management blocked auditors' attempts to interview workers off-site, by not letting them know where the drop off points were. This was at a factory that had been passed by auditors from member companies of the US-based Apparel Industry Partnership. However, when Verite managed to contact the workers off-site they then they spoke about sexual harassment, physical intimidation and forced overtime (reported in ETI 1998b). SGS course tutors, however, were reluctant to do off-site work as it was time consuming. "I feel that clandestine interviews are dangerous," admitted the first tutor. Dangerous for whom, we might ask: the client and the auditor, rather than the workers?

Given that SAI and SGS were assuming a positivist methodology, you might have thought they would be interested in the statistical significance of their results, and therefore consider using a questionnaire, for example (see Chapter 4). But the time pressure ruled these out as well. "Questionnaires are too time consuming," explained the tutor. Therefore the time pressure not only compelled a reductionist, positivist methodology, but it also prevented rigour within that methodological frame.

To conduct a thorough investigation of all issues with on- and off-site interviews, focus groups, surveys, documentary analysis, *in ways that responded to results as they arose*, was an impossible task for a three-day audit.

Internationality?

SAI emphasised that the standard was global and that it could be applied to a factory or plantation anywhere in the world, and audited by accredited companies like SGS and BVQI anywhere in the world. These auditors pointed to their multi-national presence as a demonstration of their ability to provide clients with a global solution, if required. However, these offices did not have the staff trained in social auditing, and much auditing was done by staff from US or UK offices.

Whereas civil groups such as Verite insisted on having local professionals on audit teams, SAI did not require this. Consequently SGS used translators while conducting social audits. The first SGS tutor argued that "you can do focus groups with an interpreter. It makes the thing a bit of a giggle." This suggested two things. First, a misunderstanding of the methodology of focus groups - neither the rapport nor the subtlety of understanding that you need can be gained through an interpreter (see Chapter 4). Second, that SGS's approach was shaped by the need to gain economies-of-scale from existing human resources, rather than methodological rigour. To train staff around the world to be proficient social auditors would have been an expense that may have made SA8000 auditing financially unattractive, given the profit targets of commercial auditors.

Confidentiality?

The SA8000 Guidance Document (CEPAA 1999b) stated that "auditors should not identify the applicant facility. This is in order to respect the confidential nature of the audit..." Confidentiality was considered important as a company being assessed might not have wanted stakeholders to know that it was being assessed, as it might have failed the audit.

Another reason expressed at the SGS course was that if they knew about an audit, external activists might try to affect its outcome. This, of course, was a negative view of activists, who could play a role in raising standards. As Dara O'Rourke (2000, p.7) argued, "the confidential nature of [audits means that they] cannot be verified by other researchers or NGOs, and fail to support broader public efforts to improve factory conditions." Caroline Quinteros (2001, pers com) of El Salvadorean monitoring group GMIES, explained to me that they wanted "the true situation to be told, not just kept by the companies" so although GMIES allowed some time for companies to make improvements, they always published their final report. The retailers Liz Claibourne and Gap had accepted this approach.

After successful SA8000 audits only summary results were meant to be made available to external parties. When I asked SGS for a summary following the certification of a Dole plantation, they referred me to Dole, who said to wait for a press release, which I never received. By mid 2001 the SAI website provided no specific details on certified factories, apart from their names. This lack of transparency made it difficult for other stakeholders to analyse the audit process, in order to check that these efforts were improving the situation of workers.

Objectivity?

> *We are interested in gathering objective evidence, so what NGOs say is mere hearsay until you go into the factory and do the research yourself.*

This second SGS tutor's assertion during the SA8000 course illustrates a belief in the idea of an 'objective auditor'. This was founded on the assumption that there is an objective reality that can be observed by a machine-like person, who could suspend their pre-dispositions and biases. In Chapter 4, I described how this positivist approach had been challenged within the social scientific community for 20 years, given an understanding of how the social realm is socially constructed. Therefore 'evidence' could never be 'objective' as the person viewing it is involved in deciding what it means and whether it counts as evidence in the first place. One auditor's 'evidence' is another auditor's clutter. This was illustrated by the differing opinions of tutors on the same course, about child labour:

> *No one has a big sign saying 'yes we exploit children, they're over here'. As no one will say there is child labour you have to become a Sherlock Holmes. You need to dig around for evidence. (Third SGS Tutor)*

> *As auditors we check their approach and their system, so if they don't want child labour and have put in procedures to avoid it then we would be happy. (First SGS Tutor)*

Unsurprisingly then, holes in the objectivity myth appeared during the course:

> *The auditor has to use a degree of value judgement. This meant the quality systems people had a really hard time dealing with this in the SA8000 course. One even refused to sit the exam. (Second SGS Tutor)*

The significant scope for auditor discretion had major implications for the effectiveness of SA8000 in guaranteeing improved working conditions. This is illustrated by the issue of freedom of association. BananaLink Director Alistair Smith (1999, pers com) asserted at The Values Network seminar that:

> *The auditing companies accredited to use the standard don't understand some of the issues like freedom of association. If [commercial auditors] are allowed to interpret this issue in their own way then it will undermine the credibility of SA8000. A professional £450-a-day auditor on a quick visit can't make good judgements on issues such as freedom of association and collective bargaining: they have no experience, history or credibility on this area.*

6 months later, the obvious subjectivity of the course tutor confirmed Alistair's concerns:

> *First SGS Tutor: What do you think criteria 4 [Freedom of Association] is really about?*
> *Me: Empowerment.*

First SGS Tutor: Empowerment is important. We see it as mainly a matter of communication between management and employees... we look at 'parallel means' as much as anything else... Mention of parallel means is missing in section 4.1... We are not as union focused as some. We recognise that this section comes from the union on CEPAA's [SAI's] board.

This statement was consistent with the way the course was taught.[158] It illustrates the fact that the auditors were inherently subjective, like any human being. Masking this subjectivity with illusions of objectivity served to disarm criticism of the SA8000 process.[159]

The scope for auditor discretion was accentuated by the lack of clarity in the SA8000 Guidance Document about where the burden of proof lay - with the auditor or with the auditee. Would the auditor need solid evidence of a non-conformancy to issue a Corrective Action Request (CAR), or would the auditor merely need a suspicion, so the auditee would then need to provide solid evidence that the suspicion was unfounded? It was left up to the auditor to decide. In addition the Guidance document left "a certain amount of licence" in determining minor as opposed to major CARs (First SGS Tutor). The only advice was that major CARs could be "life-threatening or in some way could be dangerous or present a risk to workers" (SAI (CEPAA) 1999, p. 54), which seemed to prioritise health and safety issues over other labour issues.

This issue was highlighted by the case study on a Chinese Shoe Making factory provided by CEPAA on the social auditor's course. The possibility of air contamination because of glue was considered serious enough for a major CAR, though evidence for this was circumstantial (auditor headaches). The key issue here was that the auditee couldn't prove that there was not a problem. Meanwhile the auditor had a suspicion about the independence of the workers' representative but they only issued a minor CAR, because s/he did not have more evidence. Why was the burden of proof on the auditee in one case and on the auditor in the other? I think because one issue involved the physical environment where as the other involved questions about personal motivations. Hence the focus on so-called 'objective evidence' restricted the audit process from dealing effectively with social issues like freedom of association. (What if one of the auditors' headaches was because of their worry over the lack of independent worker representation - would this have constituted objective evidence?!)

Despite the rhetoric of professional objectivity, all auditing decisions were discretionary, at every moment of the audit process, from choosing who to talk to, what to ask, how to ask, what to follow

---

[158] This statement alone should have been enough for SAI to investigate SGS's auditing and teaching and reconsider its accreditation. However, this was unlikely due to the initial dependence of SAI on SGS, which I discuss below.

[159] Another issue of key concern in agriculture is working hours. The first SGS tutor said "I think the standard's restriction on predictable seasonal increases in overtime is unreasonable. It could lead to the casualisation of work or the use of illegal immigrants. That's one thing you have to make a value judgement on." Whereas you or I might agree with him, it illustrates the subjectivity involved in the audit process, and so raises the question of what kind of subjectivities were involved in the auditing of SA8000 and how this affected the ability of the process to aid our common good.

up, what to recommend and so on. To claim you're objective is like claiming you don't have an accent. If you ask someone who sounds like you, they'll say you don't have an accent, but then ask someone who sounds different to you, and they'll say you do. Therefore, *who* conducted the audit was crucial and the next question to consider is what factors affected the predisposition of the auditor. This brings us to the issue of 'reasonableness'.

Reasonableness?

Ironically, given their claim to objectivity, but understandably, given their financial concerns, auditors like SGS made a feature of their favourable disposition toward commercial clients. The Asian civil group Labor Rights In China (LARIC) was concerned about their SA8000 instructor's "persistent emphasis on the 'intent' of the companies", which was assumed to be benign (LARIC 1999, p. 6). My SGS tutors assumed the good intent of applicant companies. The course was attended by people who might apply for certification of their operations, and it often felt like the course tutors were reassuring prospective clients of SGS's social auditing services. They stressed the importance of using the standard flexibly, yet maintained that this was 'objective':

> *There is the problem that compliance with the letter of the standard might not mean compliance with the spirit of the standard. You need to approach these issues* objectively. *(Second SGS Tutor,* emphasis added*)*

Therefore they redefined 'objectivity' as really meaning the reasonableness, or the 'flexible' and 'unsuspicious' subjectivity of commercial auditors.

Evidence from the field suggested that this assumption of good intent was misplaced. In his report on the breakdown of the Macro-Agreement between SITRAP and Del Monte, Gilbert Bermudez (1999b) wrote that the company adulterated documents in order to dismiss the affiliated workers, and even "produced minutes that certified the company's opinions and the union's opinions, but there were no such meetings." Thus an unsuspicious audit of paperwork could lead to wrongful certification.[160]

Caroline Quinteros, who conducted audits of GAP suppliers with GMIES, told me that she always presumed that the companies were 'guilty' before doing an audit, as her experience over the years had shown this to be the case (2001, pers com). She required a company to provide more proof if there was any evidence of non-conformancies. Therefore audits by SGS and GMIES could produce completely different results, even if they used the same set of standards, but with SGS claiming to be more 'objective' as it was not a civil group.

---

[160] The problem was not limited to banana companies in Central America. Sangem Hsu Shuaijun, head of the southern China office of the Norwegian monitoring company Det Norske Veritas, admitted that "the factories always find a way around the auditors" (quoted in the South China Morning Post 2000). This would be no surprise to management guru Peter Senge (2001, pers com) who argued that "so much game playing and nonsense goes on with financial auditing, when you realise the accountants are hired by the managers, this will go on in spades with social indicators."

The 'reasonableness' of SGS auditors therefore illustrated how someone's predisposition would affect their auditing. It should be noted that all the SGS auditors had technical backgrounds. In his critique of PwC auditing Dara O'Rourke (2000) argued that as most of the PwC auditors were financial accountants they were ill-equipped to assess labour rights issues. Financial accountants were more likely to feel comfortable assessing paperwork than people - a problem given that this should have been "about people not paperwork." (Bermudez 1999b, pers com).[161]

Neutrality?

Like a number of other groups in the emergent profession, SAI developed and marketed social auditing as a neutral test of labour conditions. Companies passed or failed audits; officially, neither did management receive help from auditors on how to improve their compliance, nor did workers receive help on how to improve their situation. The SA8000 Guidance Document stated that "certified auditors cannot make recommendations, as this is regarded as consulting" (SAI 2001, p. 54). What this meant was if auditors gave advice then they would end up certifying their own advice, which was considered unprofessional by the inspection industry, as codified in standard 62 of the International Organisation of Standardisation (ISO).

However, this restriction on auditor advice was rooted in the practice of management systems auditing not performance standards auditing. In a performance standard that looks at social relations, the idea of a neutral test was both undesirable, as this was about ensuring social change, and methodologically questionable, given that social phenomena were being investigated. I will explain each in turn.

First, the neutral test approach was undesirable as it prevented constructive advice being given to improve the situation. For example, during the focus group we found that some women had been asked whether they were pregnant during their interview to work on the plantation. There were two ways an auditor could have viewed this. On the one hand, management could have been asking this to ensure they did not employ women who would then require maternity leave and cost the company money. The ILO classified this practice as sexual discrimination against women (as pregnancy is a situation only experienced by women), and it was restricted by the SA8000 standard. On the other hand, the fact management asked about this could have been because they were interested in the health and safety of the women and wanted to ensure they did not do specific tasks with potential risks (such as applying post-harvest fungicides). If the auditor was able to identify that the most acceptable approach would be for management to make clear women should tell them if they ever became pregnant, but not ask if they were pregnant during an interview, then the best action would be to advise the management to do this. However, they were

[161] Similarly, in its assessment of labour codes monitoring, the US Department of Labor (1999) found relatively little interaction between monitors and workers or members of the local community and that this was partly because most monitors had a technical background in production and quality, not working conditions.

officially not permitted to do this under the SA8000 system; an unfortunate situation given that SA8000 was being promoted as an answer to labour standards problems.

The second problem with this notion is that it is methodologically illogical. SA8000 inherited a methodology that was suited to inspecting 'things' like light bulbs and financial accounts, and not people and social relations. People's representations of their situation cannot be treated as concrete immovable 'facts'. Evidence from our focus group concerning sexual harassment throws light on this. At first the women said that they did not suffer sexual harassment. After some more discussion, it was revealed that they didn't see the abuse they received as *harassment*, as it was 'normal' for men to behave in that way. Once it had been suggested that just because it was normal didn't mean that it wasn't harassment then they agreed that yes, they suffered sexual harassment. One woman told a story of how a boss at another plantation had harassed her once and she eventually quit. Thus evidence of 'sexual harassment' was produced by us as a team of researchers helping the women explore the issue. Other auditors may not have decided to pursue this issue, and been happy to ask a yes/no question "do you suffer sexual harassment?", and ticked the "no" box accordingly. That 'objective' evidence of the absence of sexual harassment from a 'neutral' test would have been produced by the auditors' use of uncommon terminology and consequent lack of communication with the workers.

The same applies to the issue of sexual discrimination. We found that women banana workers had internalised the prejudiced views that supervisory roles were beyond them, that serving on workers' committees was a man's responsibility, and that accommodation was a man's privilege. They were experiencing 'auto-discrimination'. As John Gaventa and Andrea Cornwall (2001) noted, "relatively powerless groups may simply speak in a way that 'echoes' the voices of the powerful, either as a conscious way of appearing to comply with the more powerful parties wishes, or as a result of the internalization of dominant views and values." To explore these issues further in the focus group we used a device, which would not be appropriate in an SA8000 audit - we focused on aspirations. I anticipated that their own self-esteem might be such that they would be resigned to their situation, and their aspirations channelled towards their children, as many parents tend to. Thus, half way through the focus group, when many of the issues had been covered and the women had expressed general satisfaction with their jobs, the facilitor Miriem Miranda asked "Would you like for your daughters – those of you who have them – to work on a banana plantation?" This is the transcript of what was said:[162]

> *No, no, no!*
> *MM – Why?*
> *I would like my daughters to study, to have more opportunities.*
> *I have a daughter of 12 and we are fighting because she wants to work here. I don't want her to. I work so hard so she can have something more and she wants to do banana work.*
> *My daughter went away to study and then she came back to work. I want her to have*

[162] MM, Miriam Miranda, ( )observations from the transcriber, voice of one subject, two to five people expressing common sentiment, six or more expressing common sentiment.

better. I am poor because I am Nicaraguan and I came here to support my kids. I want my kids to have what I can't.
♂ I wouldn't want my daughter to do this kind of work because it is too hard for women. It is very heavy, hard work. I leave my house at 4:30 in the morning and I get home at eight at night.
♂ Yes, because a woman always wants what is best for her kids, right? Here, you always have to [put up with] men.
♂ It would be nice not to have to lift boxes and things but it can't be any better because they're already treating us better here than on any other farm. But sometimes, you want to sit down and you can't. Sometimes you want to take a break and you can't.
MM – What are the social problems for women working on bananeras?
♂ Very hard work all day long.
♂ The family: you never get to see them.
♂ You can't take breaks
♂ We work from Monday to Saturday and sometimes Sunday, depending on the fruit.

This evidence contradicted the opinions they expressed moments earlier - before we had related their current situation to their aspirations.[163]

Whatever you would have your own children become, strive to exhibit in your own lives and conversation.

Lydia Sigourney

The 'neutral' approach would also lead auditors to overlook issues of passive discrimination. For example, the issue of poor transportation arose in the focus group. It was a particularly important issue for women due to the discrimination in the allocation of housing, and there were complaints that "the buses don't pass regularly. If you get off at four, you have to wait until six o'clock for the bus." Now the bus timetable couldn't easily be identified as an issue of sexual discrimination and as a failure of management (unless the buses were told only to come then in order to keep the women from hurrying home). However, if men were dependent on the buses and experienced these problems would they remain unresolved? The reason women didn't tackle the inappropriate bus timetable might have been because of a combination of their lack of self-esteem, poor communication channels with each other and with the management, and other people's general lack of interest in women's welfare.

Was SA8000 auditing able to deal with these issues? I interviewed Del Monte Costa Rica's Donald Murray after SGS and BVQI had been in Costa Rica looking at the application of SA8000 to banana plantations. He told me that they would soon be ready for SA8000:

Me: Does this mean that you have no problems with the sexual division of labour in your packing plants and thus, most probably, differences in pay between men and women?
Donald Murray: This didn't come up as an issue [with SA8000 auditors).
Me: There's not a single woman in charge of a Finca is there? Did this come up as an issue?
Donald Murray: No it didn't.

The neutral test hypothesis made SA8000 auditing incapable of dealing with passive and auto-discrimination issues. As John Gaventa and Andrea Cornwall (2001) note, "treating situated

---

163 This corresponds with the findings of the Global Alliance research with workers in Thailand. For example, they reported "although few of the workers have ever attended a university themselves, 87 percent would like their children to obtain a university education and hope they will be able to get better jobs." (Global Alliance (for Workers and Communities) 2001).

representations as if they were empirical facts maintains the dislocation of knowledge from the agents and contexts of its production." By aspiring to neutrality, auditors were accepting the power relations that existed in a workplace, and therefore by being able to pass workplaces as acceptable their actions were far from neutral - actually reinforcing those power relations.[164]

By 1999, some development research organisations were beginning to express concern about the way social auditing was developing. The Natural Resources Institute (NRI 1999a, p. 2/7) noted that "standards have too often engendered 'exam fever' with companies eager to pass or afraid of failure, and insufficient time taken to build constructive dialogue at any level." The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI 1998c) argued that the most effective companies would not use monitoring to 'police' their suppliers but as a means of educating and encouraging suppliers to take ownership of decent workplace standards and their enforcement. There were alternative forms of monitoring at the time, which didn't abide by the neutrality myth, and were more developmental. Caroline Quinteros (2001, pers com) explained that GMIES's work was different: "our work should help people to organise to solve problems. We do the auditing because we want to see change." However, these approaches did not receive the same international profile or funding as SAI, for reasons I explore below.

Wider Concerns

There were other concerns about SA8000 certification, which stemmed from its costly and bureaucratic form. Premier Brands Supply Chain Director, at the time, Phil Mumby, argued that certification "favours large suppliers and further marginalises small ones" (ETI 1998c, p. 2). Rob Lake (1999, pers com), working with the fairtrade organisation Traidcraft Exchange at the time, believed there was a risk that "standards like SA8000 will not benefit small producers or create market access opportunities, but lead to contractions in supplier bases."[165] One retailer told me SA8000 was attractive to banana companies as it could help exclude independent traders.[166]

---

[164] The professional discourse also affected the Better Banana Project (BBP), discussed in the next chapter. Their director, Chris Wille argued that they could not "certify our own recommendations; that would be unethical" (Wille 1998b, p 4). Yet to explain to an auditee at the end of an audit that they have failed on points x, y and z but you are not going to advise them on how they might be able to solve the situation and pass next time, is illogical in a performance standard which is audited by the standard setting body. Perhaps if there was more transparency about any recommendations made by auditors for BBP or SA8000, then this issue could have been solved.

[165] This was a concern reflected by agricultural producers around the world. The Kenyan Association of Better Land Husbandry (ABLH) expressed concern that its commitment to supporting small holders was being threatened by the introduction of social and environmental codes of conduct and auditing. They found that codes were more applicable and appropriate to large commercial farms where the origin of produce was easier to identify, and where there were greater economies of scale with managing the paperwork associated with the type of documented management system that could be verified by auditors (NRI 1999b).

[166] The Fairtrade Labelling Organisation (FLO) was facing these issues as it tried to standardise its assessments of producers without imposing too much of a bureaucratic burden on them. This was important as FLO had a developmental focus, trying to use trade as a lever for development by helping disadvantaged producers, often small holders and cooperatives, enter the market by guaranteeing them a better price. Yet as it began to work more closely with SAI and the professional auditing community, through ISEAL and in a joint research project (see below) its developmental approach was questioned. For example, some consultants began questioning the way FLO maintained a balance between supply and demand by restricting the number of producers on the

The focus on producer certification could also be criticised. Not only did it define the problem as stemming from producer practices, rather than buyer-supplier relations, as I described in the previous chapter, but it also allowed for the risks associated with improving labour standards and obtaining certification to be borne by producers. In times of economic stress companies could cancel their contracts with certain farms, reduce the terms and conditions on other farms, but still retain one or two as SA8000-certified, if they so wished. To illustrate, Dole could secure SA8000 certification on some of its farms, while on others sack 3500 workers and rehire them on reduced pay and with reduced healthcare provision (BananaLink 2000). This was different from the situation with nation-wide agreements, such as the one between SITRAP and Del Monte, and global agreements, such as the one between Chiquita and IUF (Chapter 7). However, commercial auditing firms wanted to promote the producer-certification solution as it created a potentially massive market for auditing services.

Other commentators saw the whole exercise as replicating imperialist economic relations with the South. Anti-Slavery International's Director, David Auld (1999, pers com) argued that:

> *There is a danger that as big monitoring organisations like PWC, KPMG, and SGS all get involved because they see the potential for future profits, so in the long-term the profit from this process will go to the North. We don't want the South to just remain as a source of cheap goods but also to develop more professional services, such as auditing...*

So perhaps CEP/SAI had accidentally helped SGS develop a system of *anti*-social auditing? If so, were there any alternatives?

Empowering Alternatives

In critiquing one approach it is important to outline another - because sometimes it is only when we see the light that we realise we were in the dark. Therefore, in 2001, I decided to write a paper that presented the results of the focus group with women banana workers and outlined a new approach to social auditing, which I called 'participatory workplace appraisal' (PWA) after the well-known development research technique called 'participatory rural appraisal' (PRA). The paper was published online by the New Academy of Business (Bendell 2001b). I decided to do this because I was concerned that local civil groups around the world might begin to think they had to conform to the 'professional' approaches being defined in the West. From my stay at a Costa Rican university I had seen how narrow notions of social science were being taught and aspired to by academics, and I had worried about the power of the western professional discourse over the thinking of professionals in Latin America and elsewhere. I wanted to try and legitimate what local civil groups already knew, and support them in articulating a different vision for social auditing.

---

fairtrade register, as this contradicted ISO accreditation and certification protocols. Phil Wells (1999, pers com) was largely ignored by other ISEAL participants when he argued that ISO might not be the benchmark for civil schemes like FSC and FLO. Thus the professional auditing discourse described above was beginning to threaten the effectiveness of other social initiatives beyond SAI.

The key aspect to participatory appraisals would be the importance of empowerment. Although SAI argued that SA8000 "increases the space for workers' organizing" (CEPAA 1999b, p. 4), my analysis suggested otherwise. Instead, I wanted to consider how workers could be empowered to determine their own labour conditions, in light of international norms. My arguments reflected those of two advisory Council members of the university-backed Workers Rights Consortium (WRC). Richard Appelbaum and Edna Bonacich (2000) argued that "the key is enhancing the power of workers" and that "workers must be "empowered to act on their own behalf." They said the WRC was sceptical of private auditing companies and wanted to develop "continuing relationships with workers themselves - the people who must be encouraged and protected to report abuses" (Appelbaum and Bonacich 2000).

Thus I called for us to look more closely at methods which might enable people to both express and analyse the realities of their lives and conditions, and to plan, monitor and evaluate their own situation. I agreed with South African trade unionist Ebrahim Patel (1998, pers com) who argued at the ETI conference that "codes should not try to micro-manage the details." Thus, I suggested two key ways of empowering the workforce through workplace appraisals. First, by focusing the appraisal on checking that the space for empowerment existed in the workplace, and second, by creating the space for empowerment through the conduct of the appraisal itself.

Drawing on Michel Foucault's understanding of power as something which is always ephemeral and needing to be continually rehearsed, Mike Kesby (1999, p. 10) argued that empowerment is not "a linear process of enlightenment, but... [a] repetitive performance" and so one-off empowering 'events' are of limited use in empowering people over the long term. From this, I argued that PWAs would need to consider with the workers how to create sustainable and sustaining spaces in their everyday lives in which their empowered thinking and acting could continue to take place. This was important as PWAs would be isolated and intermittent events, where certain uncommon assertions such as 'your participation is valued', would produce an uncommon and potentially ephemeral situation.

I also suggested we needed more research and reflection on what empowerment really means, how it occurs and where it might lead us. Having conducted related work in India, Srilatha Batliwala (1993) argued that 'empowerment really begins in the mind' in a process where women 'find a time and space of their own and begin to re-examine their lives critically and collectively' (p. 10). Srilatha pointed to the role of awareness building and organising women in a non-directive, open ended strategy so they could choose their own priorities. Awareness raising and education would also be important. GMIES director Caroline Quinteros (2001) argued that workplace appraisals could provide "the tools to help people change the situation. Knowledge is important." Feminist geographer Janet Townsend believed that the empowerment of others can't happen, and we can only enable others to *self*-empowerment (Townsend et al. 1999). This view of self-empowerment

suggests that we, as privileged outsiders, would be prepared to 'let go of the reins' so that workers could shape their own futures. This approach fits well with my definition of our common good, in Chapter 2, as the collective pursuit of individual preferences, which I consider should be the goal of anything worth the label 'civil action.'[167]

Profiting from Protest: How SA8000 Dissipated Civil Power

In the previous sections I have sought to demonstrate that the effect of SA8000 auditing on the common good of workers was questionable. Although SA8000 was being hailed as an answer to the problems that civil campaigners had put on the agenda of the banana corporations, it was dissipating the civil power of those campaigners. The problematic methodology was the result of the 'professionalising' influence of commercial firms such as SGS. As Oxfam's George Tarvit (1999, pers com) argued:

> *the private auditing companies, simply by doing what they are doing, are starting to set some of the monitoring standards. Things like 'how do we choose the workers', 'who do we consult with' and 'how long do you spend on an audit?'*

Similarly, in his analysis of PwC's auditing practices Dara O'Rourke (2000) noted that "PwC is leading the development of corporate monitoring systems" (p.1) and therefore "PwC is setting the standard for what corporate monitors will do, how they will do it, and how much they will charge" (ibid., p. 1). Fairtrade Foundation Director at the time, Phil Wells (1999, pers com) explained that "companies like SGS are not exactly interested in learning about the pros and cons of different standards and different forms of monitoring but in supplying their own existing service." Like other auditing companies, SGS staff were naturally focused on turning a potentially complex activity into a standardised product that could be marketed and sold around the world.[168]

Despite any positive intentions of individual staff, as a publicly traded for-profit company, the pre-requisite for the SGS organisation's involvement in developing and then implementing SA8000 was that revenues could be generated to meet the expectations of line managers, directors and shareholders. This commercial interest affected every aspect of the social auditing methodology required for SA8000. First, the speed of the audit was compelled by the daily rates that the auditors charged. The need for speed also had the effect of reducing the ability of auditors to investigate the situation deeply, therefore making successful audit outcomes more likely - good for generating business globally. Second, the confidentiality of the audits was an inherited trait from technical

---

[167] In the paper I noted that some might criticise the idea of PWA as unrealistic and too costly. However, as the ETI argued, "community-based monitoring is not cost-prohibitive since local consultants are paid local rates" (ETI 1998b). To illustrate, GMIES auditors charged about one 1fourth of the daily rates of SGS auditors. In addition, as Don Pollard of the Trades and General Workers Union (TGWU) said, "what do you mean who will pay? Workers are paying for it already." (1998, pers com)

[168] Given respect for a previous client, a global inspection company, I will not detail the various evidence of this claim that I came across with them. I did, however, attempt to illustrate the complexity of the issues by producing an extensive report on the labour situation in Costa Rica, in preparation for their work in auditing banana companies using the ETI base code. On receiving the document, my client said it was "amazing, but a totally useless tool, man," and set about turning it into a short checklist for their auditors.

auditing practices where transparency and dialogue were not as important. Confidentiality was kept for social auditing as it made clients feel safer as well as protecting the auditors from closer scrutiny - both commercial, not civil, considerations. Third, the notion of objectivity was promoted as it privileged the opinions of commercial auditors over local and international experts who would have a more informed and potentially critical opinion. It effectively turned ignorance into a positive feature of auditors and helped downplay the need for local expertise, allowing commercial auditors to serve a global marketplace for social audits. Similarly the notion of objective evidence was important as it allowed a tick-box approach to auditing, thereby reducing the need for in-depth audits. Fourth, the 'reasonableness' of the auditors reassured potential clients that they would find SGS to be supportive, so that hiring them might be better than another auditing company. Fifth, the idea that the audit could and should be a neutral test was inherited, like the issue of confidentiality, from existing commercial auditing practices, even though it was not an appropriate approach for improving labour standards. Neutrality was promoted by SGS as it meant that superficial evidence could be collected, which would increase audit speed and avoid any difficult issues that might prevent certification. Commercial auditing firms were not naturally inclined to explore the socially constructed realities of workers and seek to empower people for change - it might have upset their clients.

The argument for accreditation is that the individual practices of certification companies can be checked by an independent accreditor, in this case SAI. However, the history of SAI, described earlier, illustrates that at the outset their staff were reliant on SGS, who drafted the standard and advised them on how to run an accreditation agency. Although civil groups such as the Fairtrade Foundation had experience of social auditing issues they were not invited to participate, and SAI (CEP at the time) was reliant on the advice of SGS and interested companies. In 2001 there were a variety of commercial firms accredited by SAI to do SA8000 certifications, but there was still evidence of SAI's dependent relationship with its accredited certifiers.

The SAI secretariat was sometimes deaf or defensive towards legitimate criticism of certifiers. At The Values Network (1999, p. 7) meeting:

> *concern was expressed by some participants over BVQI's recent visit to banana plantations in Costa Rica. The trade unions consulted were unimpressed with the auditors' lack of knowledge of the situation and concerned that SA8000 seemed not to require auditors to systematically interview workers and their organisations. A letter outlining these concerns had been sent to CEP (SAI) four months previously but no reply had been received.*

Similarly my own more critical questions and suggestions seemed to fall on deaf ears (e.g. with regard to the agriculture project - see below). In addition, Asian civil group LARIC raised concerns that SA8000 course instructors' "emphasis... was always on... interpreting the standard in the most flexible way" (1999, p. 5) Rather than treating this as a legitimate complaint from a client about an accredited service provider, requiring some thought and follow up, SAI flatly rejected it, stating that "the course emphasis is not to encourage the most flexible interpretation of

the standard" (CEPAA 1999b, p. 4). This public refusal to investigate the potential shortcomings of professionals working with the standard reflected the dependent relationship of SAI on the accredited certification companies. Criticism of an auditor or trainer was therefore regarded as a criticism of SAI. This, of course, was a mistaken approach given the official relations between accreditors and certifiers, as codified in ISO and elsewhere, but understandable given the history of the standards development. This again reflected the power that commercial firms had over the development of social auditing.

One problematic aspect of SAI's dependence on commercial firms was its protectionist effect on the social auditing market. This arose because SAI had agreed with SGS to adhere to the guidelines of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) standard series 62. This meant that it could not treat different auditing companies any differently at any stage of the accreditation process. This meant that a small civil group like GMIES, if it had wanted to be accredited to offer SA8000 would have had to meet the same requirement as a multinational company such as SGS or BureauVeritas. The costs of accreditation were quite high, excluding many of the groups with the most experience of monitoring workplaces.[169] This protectionist approach allowed accredited companies to charge high fees. Consequently retailers knew that "the verification would end up costing more than the product, if it was done by the likes of SGS" (Foley 1999, pers com). This had major implications for the impact of the relatively small amount of resources the banana companies were allocating for work on labour issues. By making the commitment to work with SA8000, Dole spent thousands of dollars on SGS fees, which meant that Dole could only focus on a few plantations at a time. As Phil Wells (1999, pers com) noted, "certification is not necessarily the best use of resources." Companies had released funds to work on labour issues because of the suffering of workers and the resultant civil campaigning, described in the previous chapters. These funds were now finding their way into the pockets of shareholders in multinational inspection companies - people profiting from protest.

The Social Unaccountability of SAI

> *Does legitimacy come at the international or local level? By meeting consumer expectations of worker expectations? By involved [civil groups] internationally or locally?*
>
> (The Values Network 1999, p. 7)

Researchers Simon Heap and Penny Fowler [2000 #742, p. 110] noted that "a key question relating to the content of codes of conduct is who is involved in setting the standards that form the basis for the codes?" ILO conventions were used as a basis for the ETI Base Code, SA8000 and a

[169] The costs of accreditation to SAI in 2000 were as follows: application fee - US$15000, re-accreditation fee - US$5000 (every three years), assessment personnel - US$1400 (per day, per person), travel allowance (4 hours US$400, 10 hours US$800 - per person, per day), minimum annual fee - US$5000, per country fee - US$2500,

number of other codes. Therefore western companies and civil groups argued that they were not imposing their own agenda on Southern producers, but using global standards. However, ILO conventions were not written for corporations but for governments, to guide their own formulation of national labour legislation. It was always assumed that governments would interpret ILO conventions for the national and sometimes regional context. The conventions were merely one or two page documents, and on their own did not tell you what the situation should be in a specific industry sector or part of the world.[170] The fact they weren't written for corporations also meant that they did not say anything about indicators for an individual company's compliance with the conventions. "Thus the translation of ILO conventions to the actual situation of workers in developing countries remains an issue" (Heap 2000, p. 110). By presenting the auditing process as an objective implementation of the conventions, SAI downplayed this issue.

My proposal for a multi-stakeholder process in Costa Rica to interpret the standards in the local context was an attempt at a quick fix to the top-down approach of SAI (see previous chapter). As Phil Wells (1999, pers com) realised, conflicts about indicators of freedom of association, could "only be solved locally by a tripartite process, working on appropriate indicators for the local situation." Therefore ETI's David Steele asked delegates at the Costa Rican seminar to consider:

> *Who makes the decision if there is a conflict? Well a third party from overseas shouldn't. That would leave one side or the other upset. Therefore it depends on building enough consensus in the process of auditing, or monitoring and verification to remove those disagreements. But, there is no guarantee.*

David recognised the social construction and contestation of social realities. He knew that there needed to be local accountability to allow the opportunity for a consensus to emerge. David recognised that if local disputes remained they would be transmitted via an internationally networked civil society to the markets of western retailers.[171] SAI did embark on a series of consultations with Southern stakeholders around the world. Consultation is the operative word here, as it implies an extractive and non-participative approach to dialogue (Bendell 2000b). I had a personal experience of this when I was 'consulted' for my views on a proposal for SAI to develop an agriculture guidance document. The proposal listed a number of issues that needed to be looked at, such as audit scope, procedures and auditor expertise, but it did not consider the process by which these issues should be worked on - that aspect was assumed. The proposal was for a consultant to research and write a first draft and then have it reviewed by a panel of experts, before asking for feedback from stakeholders (CEPAA 1999a). On September 10th 1999, I emailed Flory Tabio of the SAI secretariat, who had asked for my input:

> *My initial thoughts on SA8000 and agriculture are that... guidance documents shouldn't be written by an individual or a committee... sitting in a Western city. There appear to be*

---

annual royalty fee - 1.5% of revenue (Ellipson 2000). In comparison the local monitoring group GMIES was paid $2500 a year for monitoring Gap factories in El Salvador!

[170] The ILO issued opinions on specific industries or parts of the world when complaints were made. In addition, there was 50 years of jurisprudence on the meaning of the conventions.

[171] There is an assumption here of communicative rationality, underpinned by a belief that there could be a win-win resolution for all stakeholders - an assumption discussed in both the previous and subsequent chapters.

> *no technical right or wrong answers when it comes to interpreting the standard in a local context: instead there are accommodations between competing stakeholders. A series of transparent multi-stakeholder collaborative processes [are required]. Basically I'm saying I think this is as much about participatory democracy as it is about deciding, for example, what pesticides should not be used to meet SA8000 criteria on occupational health and safety.*

I didn't get a reply (not that difficult via email).[172] The top-down approach of SAI led Phil Wells (1999, pers com) to complain that "the route to legitimacy for companies is already established within SA8000: it's by satisfying a New York based [civil group]." So what about this civil group? The organisational form of SAI was as follows. There was a small secretariat based in New York and an Advisory Board that commented on the standards. Representatives from the three different sectors of civil groups, unions and companies were present on this board, who were appointed by the Executive President, or the Executive Director (Fabian 1999, pers com). Board representation in this, not atypically, undemocratically run organisation was heavily biased towards US civil groups and companies. The only stakeholder in the banana trade on the board was a Dole executive. Therefore, from the start of my research I began raising the issue of SAI's accountability, or lack of, to key stakeholders. Teresa Fabian, working with CEP Europe at the time, found my questions unusual: "we get lots of enquiries, like 'what's the minimum age allowed', but no one's been asking the questions you're asking, about our accountability and internal processes" (ibid). However, in mid-1999 the Asian civil group LARIC challenged the authority and mandate of SAI. SAI responded that their "mandate derives from research and extensive consultations" (CEPAA 1999b, p. 2). Here we see a similar assumption to that made by the Conservation Agriculture Network (CAN) in its early work - that legitimacy derives from, first, technical knowledge and second, evidence of dialogue (see the following chapter).

By being good at research and consultations SAI could claim legitimacy for conducting more research and consultations. But to claim this work provided a *mandate* to then determine what was acceptable in factories and plantations around the world (and make this decision on behalf of billions of workers and consumers) was another matter. To most people 'mandate' implies someone telling someone "yes, you can do or say that for or on behalf of me." The more people who say that to you the greater your mandate. That's why people talk of democratic mandates from electorates. When SAI stressed their "ability to convene participants from [different]... sectors" (CEPAA 1999b, p. 3) it meant they understood that a mandate comes from widespread support. Yet this support was not forthcoming from the most important stakeholders in labour standards - workers

[172] The situation was not much different two years later. By 2001, SAI was collaborating with Fairtrade Labelling Organisations (FLO), the organic accreditation body IFOAM, and at a later invitation the Conservation Agriculture Network (CAN), on a joint research project coordinated by the consultancy NovoTrade. The project seemed to regard social issues as technical not political questions, where best practices could be determined by experts rather than debated and negotiated by stakeholders. Having worked with me since he read an earlier version of Chapter 10, CAN's director Chris Wille had become sensitised to the inadequacy of a purely technical approach to social issues. Chris remarked that NovoTrade's could be regarded as "a bring in the foreign experts proposal" and that he would "strive to make it more participatory and bottom up" (2001, pers com).

on the ground. And why should it have been when the SA8000 process was run by an unaccountable organisation?

SAI's defence might have been recourse to their values. Many civil group staff would reject the idea that they had to be accountable to anyone - they are accountable to their own hearts, and that is why they are doing what they're doing. At the Costa Rican seminar, the SAI's director of SA8000 explained that they had "the moral authority of NGOs who have been working on this for years." The word *moral* alluded to certain values held by the members of CEP and SAI. But what were these values? And what translated these values into an *authority,* which really means a power over others? And what does this willing acceptance of their power over others tell us about their values, their 'moral' selves?

In Chapter 2, I defined our common good as the collective pursuit of individual preferences. This means civil action - participation for our common good - is about supporting people to pursue their preferences in ways that don't undermine others - the collective pursuit. It shouldn't be about determining what is right for them, what they should find acceptable, and then imposing that on them. It shouldn't be about exerting a 'moral authority'. As the IUF's Ron Oswald (1998, pers com) argued at a panel session attended by SAI staff members, "democracy is key in defining what we want from ethical trading." This was a completely different approach to SAI. Their initial focus had not been workplace democracy but child labour, given the consumer outcry at the time - child labour remained as criteria No. 1 in SA8000. But perhaps this experience led them to treat all workers in the same way, like children to be offered patronage by a benevolent person in the West (not forgetting the debates about democracy for children being had within the UN system at that time).[173] Alistair Smith (1999, pers com) warned at The Values Network that:

> *The good intentions expressed by many people in the North involved in debates on codes of conduct must not be pursued without considering fundamental principles such as democratic participation. We need democratic institutions to support Southern workers and their representatives to exert some control over their own lives.*

Representatives of workers in plantations and factories in the global South therefore argued that they should co-own any process that had authority over their labour situation, and not have their ideas and opinions extracted as raw material for an unaccountable western civil group who would then make decisions for them.

---

[173] SAI was not alone in its approach, as many western civil groups adopted a "let's help the poor people out a bit" approach to international development issues, rather than a rights based approach. In 2000, the development charity Action Aid made a dramatic step to address this by attempting to shift it's focus from upward accountability to downward accountability. This meant internal management changes, replacing systems that used to emphasise upward reporting to donors and sponsors, and an over-reliance on Action Aid's own interpretation of change. They began replacing this with initiatives to help countries and regions run their own annual processes of participatory review and reflection, at all levels and with all stakeholder groups.

Parallels in Policy Studies

These findings parallel previous work on policy studies and power. 'Social auditing' can be seen as an emergent *policy narrative*, based on a *political technology*, upheld by an *epistemic community* in whose interests it served. I will explain each in term in turn, before considering what this tells us about how SAI exerted or resisted civil power.

In summarising the findings of development sociologists, Rachel Sutton (1999, p. 13) noted that interest groups can create 'policy narratives' which "define the issue about which policy is made, provide the framework in which alternatives are considered, influence the options which are chosen and impact on the process of implementation." The involvement of certain groups in the initial stages of agenda-setting and the identification of alternative courses of action are of fundamental importance in establishing a policy narrative (Apthorpe and Gasper 1996). "A key concern is who has the 'power to define': dominant discourses work by setting up the terms of reference by disallowing or marginalising alternatives" (Shore and Wright, 1997 quoted in Sutton 1999, p. 13). 'Social auditing' was an emergent policy narrative, clearly shaped by the early involvement of commercial auditing companies. International development researchers found that policy narratives undermined the role and knowledge of people not using these narratives, such as local people and indigenous communities, thereby providing justification for the role of experts and outsiders in the policy process (Clay and Schaffer 1984; Leach and Mearns 1996; Roe 1991; 1995). I have demonstrated that the social auditing policy narrative was having this effect, as it privileged a certain methodological view at the expense of local knowledges and experiences.

A key element to this social auditing policy narrative was the use of a positivist-objectivist methodological paradigm which attempted to de-politicise workplace standards issues. This resonates with Michel Foucault's concept of 'political technology' (cited in Shore and Wright 1997). He used this to describe the way essentially political problems can be removed from the realm of political discourse and recast in the neutral language of science. He identified how policy is often portrayed as objective, neutral, value-free, and termed in legal or scientific language, which emphasises its rationality. In this way, the political nature of the policy is hidden by the use of technical language, which emphasises rationality and objectivity (Sutton 1999). "This masking of the political under the cloak of neutrality is a key feature of modern power" (Shore and Wright 1997), and in the case of social auditing served to marginalise the more progressive monitoring practices of local civil groups.

As I have described above, by creating and protecting a market for professional services, the political technology and policy narrative of social auditing served the interests of an emerging 'social auditing profession.' Numerous studies of policy processes in the realms of international development, government planning and business management have described the existence of

what can be called 'epistemic communities' (Atkinson and Coleman 1992; Sutton 1999). These are policy communities or networks of technical experts and their organisations who have access to privileged information, use common technical vocabularies, and discuss ideas within the network. Others do not have access to this information and are excluded, sometimes by mechanisms as clear as qualifications and entry requirements. Epistemic communities have been suggested to exert influence on organisational policy-making, through their promotion of policy narratives, which establish a form of common knowledge or 'received wisdom' about what problems are and are not (Leach and Mearns 1996).[174]

Resisting Civil Power?

So what does the preceding analysis suggest to us about the power of civil society over, or with, business for our common good? Perhaps it suggests more about the power of business over civil society? Indeed, my concern for the latter made me write this chapter the way I did... focusing more on the problems of SAI than its points of success. In short, the work of SAI hadn't done, and didn't look like it would do, that much to improve the situation of banana workers in Costa Rica or elsewhere. But that's my judgement, as I believe people should aspire to, and hold out for, more changes than SAI was able to deliver. This is key, as we are in the realm of "what ifs." As we don't know what might have happened if the companies had not had the option of SAI, we must focus instead on *how* it influenced other actors. This is what I have attempted to do in this and the following chapters.

Some might consider that the evidence I have presented in this chapter indicates that the global inspection company SGS was exerting third-dimensional power over the CEP, the civil group which created SAI, by shaping their thinking in ways which served the commercial interests of SGS and inhibited the ability of CEP to enable our common good. But I can't really argue that. Although I haven't presented a detailed account here, by working together CEP and SGS created new forms of power. They managed this by combining "complementary resources" in the way that a number of businesses and civil groups were doing at the turn of the 21st century (Waddell 2000). On the one hand, SGS gained from the convening power and apparent independence of CEP, to develop the standard; they also learned a lot from CEP about labour issues, especially child labour. On the other hand, CEP gained a swift education on the auditing profession, and credibility with the commercial sector by working with a multinational inspection company. They developed a new terminology and way of working, labelled 'social auditing,' which allowed them to move forward with their respective programmes and generate significant new revenues. In addition, CEP staff gained a confidence in their relations with the corporate sector, and SGS a confidence with

[174] Some saw policy networks as larger than epistemic communities, while others view such networks as the tools of epistemic communities (Sutton 1999). It is not necessary to my argument to explore the differences between various conceptions here.

their relations with the civil sector.[175] Thus they created fourth-dimensional power through their relationship.

But CEP's thought and practice was *also* subject to the third-dimensional power of SGS and the discourse of professionalism that exists in commercial society. This occurred as CEP staff's perception of how to be professional in the area of labour standards assessments was shaped by SGS and the commercial auditing community in ways that would help SGS generate profits. Thus CEP staff developed their conviction in the ideas of objectivity, confidentiality, neutrality, reasonableness, internationality, speed, and the worth of ISO approaches to management system certification, as described above. As I have shown, none of these hallmarks of professionalism were particularly useful in helping CEP support the collective pursuit of workers' individual preferences. In fact, these hallmarks were competencies for a top-down unaccountable approach, which by its very nature was not particularly enabling of workers' self-determination.

"But I thought you said they created fourth-dimensional power?" Good question. CEP actually gained new 'power with' as a direct result of being subjected to 'power over'! A strange thought, at first. I got my head round it by saying "OK, so all forms of power are flying around all the time... the zero-sum and plus-some processes can all be going on at the same time." Then I realised that sometimes it could even be in an organisation's or individual's self-interest to be subject to third-dimensional power so they could then 'go with the flow' of commercial discourse and logic and access/create new forms of power. Something lost, something gained. Not so confusing after all. Self-interest is often served not by confronting power structures but by accepting and then climbing them.

Like most of us though, SAI staff had myriadic motives and clearly weren't just self-interested. How did being subject to third-dimensional power affect their ability to exert *civil* power, for our common good? Although I haven't detailed it in this chapter, SAI seemed to be enabling our common good in a number of ways within the textiles, toy and sportswear sectors. First, the SA8000 initiative created a lot of interest in the trade press, and therefore helped increase the profile of labour issues. Moreover, it indicated to buyers that labour problems had potential solutions, which helped shift the debate from 'its not our problem' to 'lets sort this out.' Therefore SAI helped change the discourse around these issues, enabling others to begin acting on this (a third or fourth-dimensional power, depending on your view). Second, some major companies such

---

[175] I did not present evidence of this in this chapter as many other commentators have written about this in their analysis of other business-civil alliances, as have I in *Terms for Endearment* (Bendell 2000c) and *In the Company of Partners* (Murphy and Bendell 1997b). I thought the presentation of fourth-dimensional power in the previous chapter was illustration enough, and chose to focus on the implications of this for our common good in this chapter - a choice which illustrates the 'action-writing' approach I outlined in Chapter 4. The issue which could be looked at further is whether the release of civil activist 'power within' through engaging with the private sector (i.e. gaining more confidence in their dealings with the private sector) is actually equivalent to them being subjected to a third-dimensional power, as their attitudes and aspirations can change in the process, in ways

as Toys R Us signed up and began instructing their suppliers to become certified. This would have focused minds in hundreds of factories and may have reduced some labour abuses, specifically those that would be easily noticed using the auditing methods mentioned above (such as child labour and health and safety problems). Thus through corporate intermediaries SAI was exerting first-dimensional power on factories to ensure they upheld labour standards more so than they were before. I didn't chronicle the specific benefits of SAI's work as there had been no certifications of banana farms by the time I finished my primary research (end of 2000). Third, by launching a certification scheme itself, SAI helped enshrine the idea that civil group participation in defining standards and systems was important, even if that civil participation was limited and intellectually dependent on commercial actors like SGS. This was a second-dimensional power over sectors such as toys and textiles that made it much less likely an industry-only system would succeed.[176] (It is difficult for me to comment on this further as the potentially positive effects were in trade sectors beyond the scope of this study.)

It seems that by being subjected to an uncivil third-dimensional power CEP was able to create fourth-dimensional power, which in certain cases was *civil* power, in that they used it to enable our common good. Another strange thought, at first. But then I got my head round this by realising that our myriadic motives have myriadic effects, and they are not all neatly linked together. We both intentionally and unintentionally enable some aspects of our common good and not others. Hence fourth-dimensional power can be *civil* power in terms of some aspects of our common good, but not others. By studying the banana sector I had come across some of the unintended negative effects of SAI's fourth-dimensional power, as I will now explain.

SAI's new power may have been usefully exerted over others in certain sectors but not in the banana sector. For example, SAI did not really exert third-dimensional civil power over discourse in the banana sector as social issues were already on the agenda and solutions such as BBP/Eco-OK, the SITRAP-Del Monte Macro-Agreement, the ETI pilot project and fairtrade and organic certification were already being tried. Neither was SAI really exerting first-dimensional civil power over practices in banana plantations, as the retailers were not demanding SA8000. Instead, the banana multinationals were *choosing* to use it instead of alternative approaches that may have delivered greater benefits by not being restricted to a flawed methodology (e.g. ETI research, fairtrade certification, macro- and framework- agreements with trade unions). Whereas the existence of SAI was in itself a second-dimensional *civil* power in the context of trades like toys and textiles, its existence was arguably a second-dimensional *uncivil* power in the context of the banana trade. This is because second-dimensional civil power was already being exerted through CAN, ETI and trade union agreements, so the issue was how the existence of SAI might affect

---

which may serve the interests of those they are engaging with, and (arguably) inhibit our common good. Rupesh Shah (2001b) raised a similar concern in his work on the relationship between Shell and Living Earth.

[176] It was to be seen whether SAI would be able to use this second-dimensional power by responding positively to critiques from civil society and addressing the kind of issues raised in this chapter.

those initiatives and how it might use its own second-dimensional power. This shows that power in one situation can be considered to be 'civil' but not in another situation.

Unfortunately, in the banana sector, SAI's second-dimensional power was not civil. As I explained above they were an unaccountable organisation so that key stakeholders such as local banana unions and community groups had no ownership of the SA8000 process. Indeed SAI were complicit in helping SGS exert second-dimensional power over civil society, by helping them to establish a system with only one civil group involved. Together they then restricted both corporate and civil access to the process due to the expense of the accreditation process. At the outset, even 'entry-level' information such as the SA8000 standard and the Guidance Document had to be purchased, and although the price was not prohibitive for many, having to pay to express an opinion on the standard was at odds with their rhetoric of participation. A consequent lack of civil access, interest and input allowed SAI *not to act* on certain things - non-decisions being a key aspect of second-dimensional power. For example, accredited auditors were not compelled to conduct off-site research, were not compelled to have local offices and contacts on the ground for potential complaints, were not compelled to use local experts, and were not compelled to publish information for local communities in their language.

The people who were excluded from the process were the same people who created the impetus for companies to work on these issues, by the campaigning described in the previous chapters. Therefore the case of SAI's work on the banana trade illustrates that it is the *implementation* of responses to 'forcing change' and 'promoting change' strategies that determines the effectiveness of civil power. The power of civil activists in groups like SITRAP, Foro Emaus and BananaLink was redirected by the way SAI implemented its own system of code certification and accreditation.

For both practical and theoretical reasons, therefore, we should not make the mistake of using 'civil society' as a hold-all category for all forms of associational activity, but explore the various organisations and activities being described as part of civil society. As I argued in Chapter 5, one person's 'A' is another persons 'A' and 'B'. By unpacking civil society we can understand how different 'civil' groups interact, an understanding which may lead us to question the 'civil' nature of some of those groups. In the globalising economy at the turn of the millennium, some civil groups such as SAI were much more able to access power than others. By accessing and expressing that power some civil groups were marginalising other civil groups, which given my understanding of the concept would lead me to question whether they were worth calling 'civil' anymore. I'm arriving at one of the more important conclusions of this thesis... that the new power that came up for grabs in the globalising economy was being grabbed more easily by some civil activists than others, and in using that power they risked losing their identity as civil activists. It's helpful to reflect for a moment on the philosophy of the civil activists in the International Banana Campaign (Chapter 7). What was most important to that campaign?

First was trust between organisations on either side of the world. Second, instantaneous horizontal communication. And I mean horizontal, which is a big problem for big NGOs. There is a danger for the big NGOs that their 'corporate' agenda becomes more important than talking with the people who matter.

Alistair Smith(1999, pers com)

Alistair Smith was saying that neither he, nor any other civil activist, should determine what was right or wrong for the people working on banana plantations, but engage with them to help them voice their concerns and effect the changes they called for. *This* is what working to enable the collective pursuit of individual preferences is about. Therefore it is this belief in serving others, which determines ones identity as a civil actor. I believe that if civil activists don't reflect on why it is they are concerned about an issue, like sweatshops or pollution, and recognise how their concern sits within an encompassing vision of our common good, as they gain power they will themselves become a barrier to our common good. This is the paradox of civil action, whereby it is threatened by its very success. It is this paradox which lead some commentators to suggest that civil groups and social movements should be prepared to check their own power in order not to become a barrier to social change (Cohen and Arato 1992).

So I've written myself into talking about values. I wish I'd spent more time with people talking about their visions, motivations, and values, so I'd have more to share on this issue. But much of my early research was shaped by the academic consensus at the time that you could 'know' civil society by counting the number of employees in an organisation that the state didn't tax, or the number of boy scouts in a town, or other such positivist-empiricist crap. So initially I saw civil society in purely sectoral terms, constituted by a collection of similar organisations rather than a collective of shared values. The organisational form of 'civil groups' may allow for the 'role' of a staff member to be focused on civil action more so than the organisational form of business, but we have discretion within those roles to be more or less inclined towards civil action. SAI was the result of a businessperson taking civil action, Rita Godfrey, and another businessperson, Keith Jones, who might have just been doing his job. Their work was then taken forward by other people within SGS and CEP. The truth is I don't really know what the motives and values of the key participants were. So I've found that researching civil society could involve more inquiry into how people's actions relate to their values. This kind of inquiry would itself be a civil action, as our values change by the very act of thinking about them. There is one person I should interview about this right now - myself. In this concluding section I reflect on my own values and motives, and how these influenced my civil actions, and what this tells me about my own civil power.

My Civil Intent, Action and Power

Once when I asked members of the FAO Ad Hoc Working Group on Responsible Banana Production and Trade to reflect on their personal justifications for working on social or environmental aspects of the banana trade, one member asked, "what is yours?" This is an

important question. I don't think I could have much justification in commenting and acting on these issues if I was not working for our common good, by which I mean working to enable the collective pursuit of individual preferences. As an individual activist it would be wrong for me to try and impose my idea of what was right or wrong on other people. So were my motives always civil?

Yes, and no. Looking back, I could have pushed harder to try and obtain funding and support for the proposed multi-stakeholder process to draft a social auditing protocol. Given the difficulties with CINPE, I could have looked for another organisation to take it forward. Instead, I withdrew to write a book. The book, *Terms for Endearment* (Bendell 2000c) was itself a civil action, as I wanted to articulate concepts of participatory democracy to a business audience through the concept of 'civil regulation' i.e. social and environmental codes of conduct and certifications could be thought of in terms of civil society's influence over business, rather than self-regulation, which suggested that corporations could decide for themselves what to do. In order to achieve this I didn't have to rely on persuading a range of other people and organisations, as I had to for the proposal discussed above. I could just get the book done and put the ideas out there.

I was concerned about my actions having an effect, and knew that at that stage this was more likely by publishing ideas than trying to get organisations with their own priorities working together on something. This reflects the desire of most civil activists to see something tangible come out of their work. Might this be why so many environmentalists adopted 'third wave' market-based incremental approaches to environmental problems in the nineties? Might it be why so many civil group staff joined business or became consultants? Was it why I focused on business relations from the start of my civil activist career? It was certainly part of the reason. Therefore the type of civil action a person takes is shaped not only by their civil intent but also their need to feel efficacious. This is an aspect of the 'living preference' for *meaning* described in Chapter 2, as people wish for their lives to have some impact on what they believe in.

There are other factors influencing civil action. I withdrew to write a book because it was what I knew I could do. So my choice of civil action was shaped also by what I was used to, what I felt safe and confident in doing. This is probably not unusual, and I would suggest that many civil activists' choice of action is shaped not only by their civil intent but also their 'living preference' for *security* (described in Chapter 2). My choice of the Costa Rican university department CINPE as a place to base my work was a result of my preference for security. One of my main concerns at the start of research was gaining access to the banana companies, given an apparent history of being extremely closed to researchers of all types (Chapter 6). I knew CINPE was a well-connected institution, with a specialism in business, trade and economics. As you can see, it worked, as I gained perhaps unprecedented access to the banana companies. However, looking back, I could have spent more time in a banana town, learnt the language better and perhaps

generated better links and understanding with member organisations of Foro Emaus, in a way that may have enabled the proposal to move forward more easily. Yet living in a banana town and struggling with the language was not as attractive as CINPE's air-conditioned offices with lots of European research staff to talk to, drink with and travel the country with at weekends. And when I came to write my book I didn't retreat to a banana town but to a tourist resort where there was 24 hour security so I didn't have to worry about my laptop. If I hadn't spent so much money on that place I could have stayed longer, learnt the language better and had more of an influence on multi-sectoral developments in the banana trade. I think this suggests my economic status and culture restricted my civil power within the banana trade. This was not an unusual situation for civil activists, and may explain Rainforest Alliance's choice of civil partners in the Conservation Agriculture Network (Chapter 10).

I made these decisions because I was not able to know the potential effects of different decisions and actions - how civil actions might or might not exert civil power. And as the uncertainty principle and chaos theory from the study of physics might suggest, no one ever does know. Therefore I, like other civil activists, faced with a range of options with unknown impacts, chose those that I was most comfortable with. Thus personal living preferences for security, experience, and meaning, shape civil actions as much as a pure civil intent. And my concern for security, meaning and self-esteem was why I focused on writing this thesis when I could have been 'out-there' trying to develop and implement solutions to the issues I'm writing about. 'Security', as I knew about writing, I was used to it. 'Meaning', as I had some major questions going round my head... I didn't 'know' what my beliefs were, but some things felt wrong, and others felt right. I needed the time to reflect. Moreover, I wanted to have an effect on what I believed in, and at the time this seemed more possible through writing. On the one hand my words and ideas had been treated on merit, having significant impact at the highest levels of UN agencies, corporations and civil groups, whereas in person, as someone in their mid-20s, my comments were sometimes brushed aside as 'yet another enquiry from a student.' I was easily frustrated by people in 'positions of power' who did not reflect on the problems this posed, and rather than continuing to talk nicely with them, sometimes I reverted to the written word.[177]

What you don't know, you can feel somehow.

U2, A Beautiful Day

[177] Perhaps I'm fudging things a bit with this thesis, because it's not much of a civil action for the common good of those in the banana sector. Instead I see its potential civil power coming from enlivening the research community, especially current and prospective PhD students and those working within 'civil society' studies (if it gets published). Now I'm thinking, come on Jem, isn't this choice of target audience a way of you justifying writing this thesis? If I'd decided to take civil action by writing something purely for the banana trade would it have ever been able to pass for a PhD thesis? Possibly not. Which is why I wrote spin-offs to this thesis during the four years of my research, such as the papers Talking for Change (Bendell 2001d) and Towards Participatory Workplace Appraisal (Bendell 2001c). And why I got involved in local grassroots activism, which took me to Genoa (Chapter 2), and consultancy projects like the ones for a multinational inspection company and CAN (see the following chapter). Civil action-research is a tall order - so tall it can go on forever.

So I've realised my own civil actions were the result of a range of different factors, including but not exclusively, civil intent. This suggests that we should focus more on people's values, hopes and concerns when researching 'civil society' - how people's own living preferences shape the way they take, or don't take, civil action. The problem here is that people can feel threatened if you start inquiring into their values and motivations. Work decisions are 'meant' to be made, and then justified, in impersonal ways. You don't tell your boss you decided something not because it helps the company but because it protects your position within that company. Neither do you easily tell your boss if you're depressed. Professional life is a performance. Researchers might be let in to watch the show, but won't easily be given back-stage passes. This suggests the importance of first-person inquiry and taking civil action yourself in order to know it (Chapter 4).

So did I exert civil power? Every so often I had feedback, which suggested that my publications had an effect on people's thinking.[178] But what of my civil action in the banana sector? My first action was to organise a seminar in the UK on these topics, and then send the report to interested parties. It was difficult to know how people were helped by this seminar, and in retrospect I should have followed up to find out (I did subscribe people to an e-group to discuss the issue raised, yet nobody did!). I first published something on the Better Banana Project (BBP) in August 1999, which led to me working with them on finding solutions to some of the problems and gave me new insights into the constraints on civil action, which I describe in the following chapter. Whether this led to beneficial changes in certified farms across Latin America is difficult to say at the time of writing. Other activists working in this sector appreciated that report, such as ETI's David Steele and BananaLink's Alistair Smith, with it feeding into their own thinking and practice in the area of voluntary certification. Then there was the meeting I organised in Costa Rica. Did it help people understand the issues more and move forward constructively? It certainly helped introduce local stakeholders to the ETI initiative for the first time. Did my report for a multinational inspection company help them change their approach? It seemed not to, as it was reduced into a simple document and by 2001 reports were already coming from Costa Rica that many stakeholders were upset with the approach of social auditing companies.

In September 2001, a week before an international conference looking at voluntary codes in the banana sector, I published a report presenting some of the arguments in this chapter (Bendell 2001b). At the time of writing it was difficult to say what effect this might have, although at that conference representatives from FLO began discussing whether ISO was an inappropriate institution to set standards for certification and accreditation, given that it worked within a non-participatory research paradigm. At that conference representatives of banana companies also expressed interest in a more developmental approach to work on social issues. The reaction from

[178] The UN Secretary General's Senior Adviser, Georg Kell, kindly said he was 'inspired' by some of my earlier writings; seeing how civil society was affecting corporate practice was helped him to devise the idea for the UN Global Compact. I also heard that the civil group Forum for the Future had numerous copies of In the

some SAI staff and accredited certifiers was not positive, with one asking 'how could the New Academy publish such a thing'? At the time of writing, in 2002, they had not responded to the specific issues raised.[179] Therefore I could not point to that much demonstrable success in influencing business for our common good. But at least I tried. And perhaps this is key - because intentions do matter, and effects are often unpredictable.

We can't predict the outcome of our civil actions, even if they seem to have an initial civil effect.[180] For example, I was part of the chorus of voices pointing to the benefits of inter-sectoral partnerships at the turn of the 21st Century (Chapter 3). I was doing this to add weight to the argument that civil groups should be involved in corporate decision-making, given the problems of governance outlined in Chapter 2. Yet by 2001, the rhetoric of inter-sectoral partnership had taken off to such a degree that politicians were explaining the withdrawal of the state and privatisation of public services in terms of public-private-partnership (Bendell 2001e). I had been arguing for partnership as a remedy for government deregulation and privatisation, but was being drowned out by those arguing for partnership as a tonic for *more* government deregulation and privatisation. The question of the unintended effects of civil actions is something I explore further in the following chapter.

Company of Partners (Murphy and Bendell 1997b), so it might have influenced the thinking and practice of some of their staff and scholars. Some people, such as Rupesh Shah, said it influenced their choice of career.

[179] At the time of writing its still to soon to say where this will lead. Check out www.jembendell.com for the latest news.

[180] To illustrate, some thought that the Global Compact marked a dangerous new era of corporate influence over the UN. Or take the example of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). I took civil action in helping devise the concept for the MSC from the end of 1995. However, by 2001, I was not alone in thinking it had become an unaccountable body that was not helping artisanal fishing communities or fish workers. I'd proposed a system that would have addressed the social aspects of the fishing industry, yet 4 years later the MSC's accreditation manager at the time quipped that they were "only interested in the social life of a fish." Equally concerning was the potential 'professionalising' influence they seemed to be exerting over other civil groups involved in certification, through their leadership involvement in the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance (ISEAL).

CHAPTER TEN. Banana Garter: Facilitating Change in Business through the Better Banana Project (BBP)

"Little girl." An interesting name for one of the largest US agricultural companies in the world. "Chiquita" in Spanish. This little girl had her 100th birthday in 1999 and within months she was given a green banana garter to proudly wear for all her plantations around the world. She had to work for it though, as a network of environmental groups inspected all her plantations before certifying they were worthy of being called "Eco-OK". Coordinated by the US-based Rainforest Alliance, they called themselves the Conservation Agriculture Network (CAN)[181] and by 2000 were running one of the largest eco-labelling programmes in the world, certifying coffee, citrus fruits and banana. Over 160 banana farms were certified by their Better Banana Project (BBP), totaling more than 120,000 acres of land in Equador, Colombia, Panama, Guatemala, Honduras and Costa Rica (Rainforest Alliance 2000). Not everyone was happy about Chiquita having this green banana garter, claiming she didn't deserve it, and that those who gave it to her were distracting people's attention from just how nasty she'd been. In this chapter I tell the story of how Chiquita Brands International came to be certified to BBP and what some of the benefits and drawbacks were, for our common good. Although BBP involved other companies I focus on Chiquita, given that it was the largest company, and was involved from the outset. I then analyse this in terms of the four dimensions of power to consider what this case tells us about the influence of civil society over business in a global economy for our common good. I conclude by reflecting on what I learned from my own civil action to try to improve the BBP system.

In the previous chapters I focused on the processes of interaction between private and civil sectors (or non-civil and civil actions) and not as much on the effects of this interaction in the fields, housing estates and packing stations of banana plantations. This was because initiatives such as the SITRAP-Del Monte Macro agreement were short-lived, and the ETI, SAI and the IUF macro-agreement had only just started when I was doing the research. Thus most of my insights relate to the way policies and agendas were being shaped. It was a different situation for BBP. By 2002 the participants had shared a decade of history in trying to improve the social and environmental impacts of banana production. Surely then, this would be able to tell us something about the effectiveness of civil power? Yes and no: the facts of the improvements were completely contested by different stakeholders, as were the impacts of the banana trade generally (Chapter 6). A fuller account of the history of BBP, including the range of claims and counter-claims, and analysis of what it meant for managing certification systems, was published as a paper called *Growing Pain?*, which I put on the web: www.jembendell.com. In this chapter I focus more on what the initiative tells us about civil action and civil power than on how to manage and maximise that power.

[181] In 2002 this was renamed the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN).

A Tale of Two Stories: Conflicting Perspectives on the Better Banana Project.

The relationship between the Rainforest Alliance and Chiquita Brands International had its origins in the massive expansion of banana production in Costa Rica in the late eighties and early nineties, when the land area under cultivation increased from 20,000 hectares to 50,000 hectares in just five years (Vega 1999, pers com) This resulted in deforestation - a concern to the Alliance, which was "an international non-profit organisation dedicated to the conservation of tropical forests for the benefit of the global community" (Rainforest Alliance 1999). Chiquita, which operated in Costa Rica as Compañía Bananera Atlántica Limitada (COBAL), was the country's third largest banana exporter in 1999, accounting for more than 18 percent – 21 million boxes – of the total $623 million exported *(The Tico Times 2000a).* It was one of a number of companies being sued in the US in the early nineties by Central American workers who had been made sterile by their handling of certain pesticides on banana plantations (Chapter 6).

Chiquita's Latin American Environmental Controller, Carlos Vega considered that Chiquita's practices at that time were far from ecologically aware:

> *[In the early nineties] Chiquita's production was very conventional and using aggressive technology... At this time COBAL realised it needed greater environmental responsibility. Management realised that there were many issues needing solutions, such as pesticide reduction, waste management, and recycling (Vega 1999, pers com).*

His department stated that what "is good for the environment is good for business. The company wants to use sustainable production methods because this will secure the long-term future of the industry" (Chiquita 1995b, p. 1). This reflected a growing belief within the business community at the time that stewarding environmental resources could deliver more efficient production. In addition, the staff at COBAL recognised that the market was changing and becoming more sensitive to environmental issues:

> *In Latin America we need an ear in the States and an ear in Europe. This effort has been because of pressures from Europe. We seek stable relations with the high value markets from European countries...Our people in Europe wanted everything faster, because they saw how the market was going over there (Vega 1999, pers com).*

Carlos had just completed a Masters course in environmental management at the Costa Rican institute INCAE and sought to use this knowledge in his career. He had a personal commitment to environmental protection and a belief that he could work within industry to accomplish this.

For Rainforest Alliance, they sought innovative ways of working to further their campaign goals, in light of the challenges that globalisation posed. The director of their Conservation Agriculture Programme, Chris Wille (1999c, pers com), was keen to make a real and immediate difference:

> *I've been in conservation for 30 years and the old style of throwing rocks at companies and working with governments is out-moded. Governments are not the dominant force, especially in this part of the world. Somebody has got to go into the boardrooms.*

His conviction was indicative of approaches termed 'third-wave environmentalism' where environmentalists sought to move beyond advocacy and criticism and begin working with industry on solutions to specific challenges (Murphy and Bendell 1997b). Therefore, while there were emerging commercial reasons for working on this, BBP had its roots in individual commitment, with strong civil intent, framed by a new discourse of working beyond the governmental sector on incremental solutions to environmental problems[182].

Once they had decided to work on environmental issues, Carlos Vega (1999, pers com) believed that they "needed to get [civil group] involvement. If we made the changes, but had no 3rd party participation, we would not be successful." As illustrated with ETI and SAI, the growing reputation of civil groups created a new discourse on the importance of civil participation in voluntary industry initiatives, which thus enabled some civil groups to secure 'a seat at the table' - necessary for both overcoming and exerting second-dimensional power.

Some years later, Chiquita's international management recognised the strategic value of a progressive social and environmental position, and of working with civil groups like the Alliance. By 2000, the history of the initiative was re-written so it could be regarded as part of a coherent policy from the corporate management. Chief Operating Officer (COO), Steven Warshaw (2000, pers com) told CNN that as "all the information is available all the time; it would not suit consumers of Chiquita bananas in North America or Europe to believe that product was produced in anything other than the correct environment, to the correct standard." He argued that the IT revolution meant there was no alternative to demonstrating corporate social responsibility: "I don't think that we can afford not to be responsible. We live in a very transparent time, where everyone knows everyone's business" (ibid). We can understand this policy position in one of two ways. It either illustrates the first-dimensional power of civil society over business, due to civil activists' ability to communicate concerns to audiences such as consumers, investors, staff and regulators, which could then hurt a company financially, or the power of the idea that this was the case in impelling a reaction from business (which we can regard as either third-dimensional power over or fourth-dimensional power with, depending on whether we believe these ideas were in Chiquita's interests).

Dialogue

In 1992, Lenin Corrales at Universidad Nacional brought many different groups together to discuss minimum standards for banana production. A variety of organisations were involved in those discussions, including those in Foro Emaus. Rainforest Alliance raised funds for this dialogue to be taken forward by the local civil group Fundacion Ambio, in order to develop

[182] Fundacion Ambio hoped to demonstrate their professionalism and competency, as many companies in Costa Rica did not take civil groups seriously (Carazo 1999, pers com).

specific standards and a certification system. For the first time, managers sat down with scientists and environmentalists to discuss improvements in the banana industry.

Before 1992, the environment had not featured on the agenda of any major banana company, in the sense that they regarded environmental and social issues as the reserve of government, and as a business cost rather than an opportunity. At the time, university scientists were studying pesticide pollution and were critical of the companies, but did not have the wherewithal to channel that into effective action. For the companies to recognise the issue and the validity of meeting with scientists and environmental groups was a major step. For the scientists to leave the laboratory and start listening to the problems and priorities of management was also a major step forward. Then there were the environmental groups who were more accustomed to working on conservation area management or drafting of new environmental law: for them to start discussing practical steps forward with industry was also a major challenge. This process took significant time and resourcing: "At the start of the project we made a serious and sustained effort to bring people into the process. We funded a series of meetings inviting various people including Foro Emaus members" (Wille 1999c, pers com). Given the different cultures represented around the table in 1992 it seems inevitable, in retrospect, that there would be irreconcilable differences. The "discussions were like a swirling disk, as different people dropped out at different times when they didn't like certain standards" (Vega 1999, pers com). Thus most organisations were not able to find new understandings or reach compromises, and Chris Wille became concerned that none of the companies would support a certification system:

> *The major players in the banana industry did eventually talk to us and we built up credibility by accepting the facts of agronomy: we accepted the realities of monoculture in the tropics. Once we saw they were willing to talk and vice versa we got somewhere... finally COBAL... enrolled some of their farms. It was then that we could really test the standards and have a good deal of give and take. We found people like Carlos [Vega] who had real knowledge and were interested in the challenge. (1999c, pers com).*

Therefore those organisations that were prepared to compromise some key concerns were able to work together. There are various ways of looking at this. On the one hand, accepting "the realities of mono-culture in the tropics" meant accepting what was an unsustainable mode of production, given the amount of oil used in the production and application of agrochemicals and the persistent effects of some of those chemicals (Chapter 6). This would suggest that the banana companies exerted second-dimensional power by refusing to participate unless the Alliance gave up its vision of sustainable agriculture. On the other hand it illustrates the power of compromise, through working on those aspects of our common good where there is the possibility of sharing fourth-dimensional power. Reducing the environmental impacts of banana monoculture would enable our common good by reducing some of the worst excesses of environmental pollution on workers and the local environment, but would not necessarily enable long-term sustainability - essential for the collective pursuit over the longer term. This illustrates the manifold dimensions to our common good. The concern is whether the fourth-dimensional power for working on one dimension of our

common good might begin to exert non-civil power by inhibiting the pursuit of other dimensions of our common good. This paradox of civil action is a recurring theme, which I return to below.

Once Chiquita began working with the civil groups they "shared knowledge," with the Alliance and Ambio suggesting things and COBAL "considering whether it would be possible or how", or the company suggesting things and the civil groups "deciding whether it was relevant. Overtime they developed their own knowledge and skills and began to move the bar higher" (Vega 1999, pers com). Some might regard this as 'communicative practice', a form of communicative action that also involved reflexive practice, which developed new and enabling forms of thinking and acting. As I describe in Chapters 8 and 11, this perspective can be questioned if it overlooks the way that commercial discourses and logics shape the scope of the dialogue - in Jurgen Habermas's (1987) terminology how 'systems' (of power and money) influence 'lifeworlds' (open creative thinking and being). As I show in the case of SAI and SGS, the commercial interests of the corporate participants in dialogue can shape outcomes in ways that serve their commercial interests. This can help or hinder our common good, depending on how many dimensions of the collective pursuit you consider (and as such this fourth-dimensional power can be civil or not).

In 1993 they agreed an environmental standard for banana production. This included stipulations on the conservation of vegetative cover, agrochemical management, forest conservation, waste management, new developments, environmental education and training, environmental research, and compliance with national laws. Although there was mention of research into reducing the use of agrochemicals, this early standard is notable for its omission of the concept of continual improvement and specifically the requirement to continually reduce agrochemical use. In addition the initial standard made little mention of social issues and labour rights. By 1995 the guidelines were up to 150 in number, from 29, and in 1998 the banana criteria had been revised a number of times and comprised 9 key areas with numerous subsections, indicators and appendices. Concepts such as continual improvement and continual reductions in agrochemical use had become key aspects of the standard, as were requirements for the protection of occupational health.

The improvement in the standards indicates the fourth-dimensional power accessed through constructive dialogue and reflexive practice. However, it was also a result of external pressures and non-constructive criticism of the programme by other civil activists. The International Banana Campaign described in Chapter 7, prompted consumers and retailers to ask searching questions of Chiquita, which added urgency to the social and environmental initiatives of the banana company. For example, after reporters of the *Cincinnati Enquirer* asked Chiquita's attorneys and a Rainforest Alliance official about the company's aerial spraying policy, Robert Kistinger, president of the Chiquita Banana Group, left a voice-mail message to John Ordman, Chiquita's senior vice president of finance, saying that he wanted officials to figure out "how quickly" they could "begin to implement a procedure" for ensuring they did not spray fungicides over workers while they

worked in the fields. He said it was something they had to "think about getting done fairly quickly." Pointing to the arguments of civil groups he stated that there was "enormous build-up of pressure" from the public in Europe to protect banana workers, (quoted in Cincinnati Enquirer McWhirter and Gallagher 1998b).

Carlos Vega noted that from 1998 onwards both the focus of Chiquita and CAN moved on to social issues, more so because these issues were being raised in Europe than in the dialogue between the Alliance and CAN (1999, pers com). BBP could claim credit for ongoing advances in policies such as the effective working of a ban on aerial spraying, by providing a framework within which such policies could be formalised, monitored and verified. However, it was the ongoing pressure from confrontational civil groups and investigative reporters that made certain issues, such as aerial spraying, more immediate. This illustrates that civil activists' first-dimensional power over corporate practice, via consumer, media and retailer intermediaries, was important in compelling certain actions, even if they were then facilitated by civil groups working collaboratively with the corporation. This was a clear indication of forcing change and facilitating change strategies unintentionally working together in changing corporate practice for our common good.

Therefore it is important not to overplay the importance of fourth-dimensional power shared by business and civil society in helping business serve our common good. In this case that shared dialogue, learning and trust actually caused problems for the participants, as Ambio and the Alliance were meant to be operating an independent certification scheme. Fundacion Ambio's Max Valverde (1999, pers com) considered that "at the start being close was important, as we were working together on how to improve things. But... as a certification scheme it can't be like that." As there was no third party accrediting the auditing of Alliance and Ambio staff, the independence of these civil groups was questioned. *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, which conducted a major investigation into Chiquita in 1998, noted that "while the Rainforest Alliance has continued to try and present the program as open to everyone, Chiquita's participation overshadows all others" (McWhirter and Gallagher 1998a). Director of Bananalink, Alistair Smith (1999, pers com) suggested that:

> *The close and monopolistic relationship between Eco-OK and Chiquita means it couldn't have any credibility... They are more independent now, as a result of the criticism, but because of this past they still cant get 100% credibility.*

Director of the banana union SITRAP, Gilbert Bermudez (1999b, pers com) put it rather more bluntly: "Chiquita and ECO-OK are the same thing: Chiquita pays, Chiquita commands." Although I disagree that the Alliance was financially dependent on Chiquita, the trust the civil group had established did mean that they were less inclined to consult with other, less-trusting, stakeholders. An auditing methodology which involved confidential meetings with workers, civil

groups and university researchers in order to cross-check company data was initially seen by the Alliance and Ambio as somewhat insulting to the commitment of the Chiquita staff.

Thus creating new forms of power through sharing complementary resources and engaging in communicative action can create problems with those not engaged, and therefore the gains are threatened. A key problem was that when the standards drafting process stopped in November 1992 the opportunity for dialogue with those not able to make compromises at the time also stopped. Chris Wille (1999c, pers com) explained that "as the programme picked up speed and we had a lot of implementation work we then ignored other organisations in civil society... Our excuse here is not having the resources." An expert on pesticides who collaborated on a critical report on BBP, Yamileth Astorga (1999, pers com) recalled that Fundacion Ambio never asked her advice after the certifications began. Some organisations in Foro Emaus did make their concerns known to Ambio but did not receive a response (Vargas 1999, pers com). Ambio's Felipe Carazo (1999, pers com) said that there was an "open window" for people to comment on the standards when they were reviewed, however he admitted his frustration that there was no procedure for facilitating and managing such participation and review. When asked about whether he had contacted Foro Emaus organisations as part of the auditing process Hector Brenes (1999, pers com), a BBP auditor and former Fundacion Ambio employee, remarked that they were "not interested." However, given the constituencies these organisations represented (banana workers, their families and the local communities) their involvement in the standards review process and effective monitoring of certified companies was sorely missed. Ambio's Felipe Carazo (1999, pers com) explained that it was "hard to enter into dialogue with Foro Emaus" as many of them were "against the whole concept of the programme" because it involved Chiquita.[183]

Expanding Coverage and Networks.

The first two (independently run) farms, Platanera Rio Sixoala, Bribri, Costa Rica and Kea'au Plantation, Kea'au Hawaii were certified in July 1993 (ECO-OK 1993). Soon after the first COBAL farm was certified, and this fact was advertised in the United States by Rainforest Alliance, so Chiquita's corporate head-office became aware of what was happening and summoned the Costa Rican management. Carlos Vega remembered fondly the moment he ascended Chiquita's skyscraper headquarters in Cincinnati and asked for millions of dollars to expand the BBP project to all Chiquita plantations around the world. They agreed, and therefore what had started as an

[183] Herein lay the problem. Chiquita's constructive relationship with the Alliance was not typical of its relations with civil society during the nineties. Despite a lot of progressive work done by individual Chiquita staff on the ground in Latin America, the enlightened approach did not rise quickly to head office. Before 1999, the corporate headquarters was closed to dialogue with its stakeholders, having used attorneys and public relations firms to manage it external communications. For example, they did not send their representatives to multi-stakeholder conferences as they wanted "people to gather information rather than represent" them (Vega 1999, pers com). Chiquita's defensive corporate culture toward civil society was illustrated by their threatened court action against the newspaper *Cincinnati Enquirer* and their failure to respond to letters presented by the confederation of banana unions, COLSIBA, at a conference in Guatemala in 1998 (Barrantes 1999, pers com). After 2000 they underwent a significant policy shift and opened up to civil society.

initiative of a few committed managers in a Costa Rican subsidiary, who were responding to the concerns of local civil activists, spiralled into a major environmental initiative for the largest banana company in the world. BBP was "one of the few examples where we in Costa Rica have managed to change the agenda in the States," professed Carlos Vega (1999, pers com).

As part of this process the president of Chiquita, Keith Lindner, wrote an open letter to the company's associates, on 30th September 1995, in order to make it clear that BBP was corporate policy and to galvanize everyone into action. In the letter he stated that "we want the famous Chiquita blue label to become a symbol not just for a superior product but also for environmental responsibility" (Lindner 1995, p. 1). This top-level statement was required as the programme meant significant changes in thinking and practice on banana plantations:

> *We did get some resistance. Some finca managers would say 'why do we need to keep our rubbish and not dump it in the river? We've dumped it in the river for over 20 years and when the floods come it is washed away'. Some managers, like the production managers found that their whole job was being changed and so there was some resistance there too (Vega 1999, pers com).*

That people like Carlos Vega had been empowered by senior management to demand these types of changes from plantation managers illustrated how local civil actions had accessed power at the global level, which then filtered down to other localities around the world. It is the paradox of the major transgovernmental corporations (TGCs) that although their global operations had contributed much of the deregulatory pressures on governments in the global South, that very same fact of transgovernmentality allowed them to instigate beneficial changes in different countries in a coherent and relatively quick manner. Moreover, it was their single global brand image that increased the hazard of criticism damaging their sales, and the potential of praise supporting their sales. Thus a coherent global approach was required, and Chiquita's senior management set a target for all their plantations to be certified by the turn of the millennium, a target they reached soon after.

By 1999, the programme had roughly cost $2 million (US) per 6,000 hectares, and then a further 3 cents a box to maintain. Boxes sold from anywhere between $4 and $7 depending on contracts and the state of the banana market. At that time Chiquita had not worked out the savings from reduced chemical usage (Vega 1999, pers com), which suggests that eco-efficiencies[184] were not of paramount concern. These figures indicate that whatever people argued were or were not the benefits of the initiative (see below), real resources were being spent on making changes to production methods. These resources were not being spent because of governmental or intergovernmental regulations but because of the changing expectations of society, catalysed through civil action within companies and civil groups.

[184] Eco-efficiencies are areas where financial savings can be made by investing in environmental changes.

With the rapid expansion of the certification programme across Latin America, the organisation behind the BBP certification process and label changed at the end of 1998, after 5 years, with the launch of a network of environmental groups across Latin America, calling themselves the Conservation Agriculture Network (CAN). Through the establishment of CAN, the Alliance involved a wider constituency of stakeholders in the process, as a means of dealing with some of the accusations of being too close and dependent on the main company involved, Chiquita. They also wanted to open up the process of standards development and review in order to encourage more local involvement, and counter some of the concerns about the unaccountability of BBP.

Chris Wille (1998a) asserted that "by working as a network of local conservation organizations" they would be "able to interact with community groups, deal with local concerns and ensure" that their criteria were "in-line with local reality and culture" (p. 1). In addition he wanted a new-style of relationship, working "in partnership with local groups" and so "tried to design a new type of relationship, where the power is shared between partners and not centralised in the West (Wille 1999c, pers com).

This was a significant step forward from top-down processes where everything was decided in a head office in North America or Europe, as with SAI. This was important not just in allowing the initiative to gain more information of the local situation but also in enabling local people to determine their own situations. Yet there was a problem with CAN's ability to enable the collective pursuit in this way, which relates to the realisation I had in Siquirres when I first jumped off the bus and dropped in on Padre Vargas at Foro Emaus (Chapter 6).

That realisation was that we should not assume that civil groups in the global South share similar characteristics to civil groups in the North. There was less charitable giving or national foundation grant-giving in less-industrialised countries (excepting religious groups), which meant that they did not have memberships or supporters and were resourced by Northern organisations or their national governments. Therefore civil groups were not necessarily independent movers and shakers with a mandate from a wide membership base, as was often the case in the global North, but were instead quite entrepreneurial and focused on servicing their clients in the national and international grant giving communities. As you needed to be well educated, well connected, computer literate and able to speak English in order to access the international community of grant-giving, these groups were not representative of the local populace. It was the grassroots organisations, such as community groups and trade unions, that were more accountability to local people. Yet it was these groups who often didn't have decent computers, didn't speak English, didn't know who to talk to on the international scene and who had never filled out a grant application. Unfortunately, the belief that by networking with "conservation organisations", Rainforest Alliance was able "to interact with community groups" and so avoid the kind of conflict experienced in Costa Rica, was optimistic. Although they may have been working to enable

various dimensions of our common good, such as environmental conservation, their mandate to work on behalf of people directly affected by agricultural activity was questionable. This would undermine their ability to enable other aspects of our common good, such as people's economic self-determination.

This illustrates how some people and groups in society had more access to the new civil regulatory networks than others. Moreover some of those people had more access to the implementation processes of policies compelled by civil action. Thus their accountability to other civil actors was key to whether civil regulation was enabling our common good. Somewhat similarly to SAI, CAN stated that "partnership and consensus" was one of their "precepts and convictions" (1999b, p. 1). The issue was with whom partnership and consensus would be sought, and could be sought, given certain stakeholders' perspectives on who was controlling the process. Referring to their work to develop standards for sugarcane, Luis Fernando Guedes Pinto, director of CAN member IMAFLORA, explained that CAN would "not 'own' the resulting guidelines" (CAN 1998, p. 4). It was one thing to say one would not own the standards but it is quite another thing to put in place a transparent and effective system for co-ownership. Such a system would be an important institutionalising step toward the collective pursuit of our common good.

From Civil Action to Civil Effect?

As I described in Chapter 6, the banana trade in Costa Rica was the site of so much controversy between different stakeholders, that it was difficult to be certain of even the most basic facts. Consequently it was extremely difficult to assess how successful BBP had been in improving conditions on certified banana farms. In this section I will discuss some of the evidence for changes on certified farms, concerning environmental issues, then social issues. Then I will consider what the effects were on the wider banana trade.

Environmental Issues

Both CAN and Chiquita claimed they succeeded in reducing significantly the environmental impacts of banana production. Examples included the reduction and near elimination of herbicide use, the collection of plastic wastes and the pulping and reapplication of banana waste. On a visit to El Roble plantation, COBAL's environmental assistant Hugo Ramirez (1999, pers com) explained:

> *No herbicides are used here, and weeding is done by machete. This raises labour costs but does not decrease yield. This is because before all the superficial roots of the banana plant were killed by the herbicide, reducing the efficiency of the plant. The herbicide also damaged the baby banana plants.*

At the same plantation, Roberto Mack, an organic farmer who had criticised BBP in the past, explained that this was a major change to the mechanistic, modernist thinking of banana farmers in the past:

Before they saw the grass as competition for the expensive nitrogen fertilizers they were applying, so applied herbicides to kill the grass. They needed to apply this much fertilizer in the first place because the superficial roots were being destroyed by the herbicide. But they didn't realise this. A plantation with only banana trees and bare soil was regarded as the most efficient model of production. Of course it also led to soil erosion (1999, pers com)

This cultural change, regarding the soil as a living thing rather than a banana-producing machine, helps explain what was then a new enthusiasm for waste collection and recycling:

The banana stems used to be dumped. Now we pulp them, put them in bags and then put them around the bottom of the tree, as a fertilizer... We now collect the twine and the plastic bags for recycling. Before the twine was left in the plantation, as were some of the bags [the others used to be dumped].. This led to a reduction in the porosity of the soil, raising runoff, erosion, reducing the oxygen in the soil and because of this, reducing banana production. The twine also became a focus for soil [organisms], which tried to break it down rather than the organic wastes. The plastic bags and the twine also restricted the banana roots. (Ramirez 1999, pers com)

In addition, CAN claimed that Chiquita had "cut nematicide use in half overall" with some farms not using nematicides at all (Wille 1998b, p. 4). Many of these environmental improvements can be classified as win-wins, the idea being that they reduced environmental impacts without reducing production. This suggests that the civil power of BBP was exercised within the confines of a win-win discourse, which would exclude initiatives that were not of net financial gain to the participating company. It is interesting to note however, that Chiquita did not work out their financial savings (from reducing chemical usage, for example). Perhaps this was because the win-win discourse of eco-efficiency was so strong, or perhaps because Chiquita's proponents of the scheme did so out of civil intent, and the win-win argument was merely a 'story' used to equate this intent with their roles as managers of a for-profit corporation.

This indicates how there is often a willingness to believe in apparently positive ideas such as sustainable development and corporate social responsibility. They can excite people within the business world with the idea that they can pursue something particularly worthwhile within their organisational role. Moreover they can excite long-term civil activists who are frustrated with traditional approaches at trying to achieve civil effects, with the possibility that there are new ways of generating change. Chris Wille (1999c, pers com), Hector Brenes (1999 pers com), and Carlos Vega (1999, pers com) all told me of a variety of instances where, once they had understood the reasons for the initiative, plantation managers showed enthusiasm and ingenuity in coming up with additional activities to improve their environmental performance. This illustrates how our 'power within' can be liberated when our consciousness of our common good and our relationship to it is raised.

Nevertheless, some of the main improvements mentioned above were disputed by other critics.[185] For example, in 1998 reporters for the *Cincinnati Enquirer* found evidence of aerial spraying when workers were in the fields, something prohibited by BBP. Esther Rodriguez Anchia, who lived near Chiquita subsidiary plantation Super Amigos, told reporters that her home was regularly sprayed with pesticides from Chiquita airplanes, and Luis Perez Jimenez, a leaf cutter on COBAL's Cocobola plantation, told them through a translator: "They never tell us about the aerial spraying. We just see it coming and boom, it's here" (McWhirter and Gallagher 1998b). In addition, they found Bitertanol on a plantation, a chemical which was not allowed for use on farms in the United States and therefore presumably prohibited under the BBP standard (McWhirter and Gallagher 1998b). In addition, when I was at the plantation Finca 6 conducting a focus group (Chapter 9), I saw information that experimental pesticides were being used, which contravened the spirit of BBP if not the details. Moreover, many buildings and the school playground were adjacent to the banana trees, which raised questions about contamination.

Social Issues

Another area of improvement outlined by BBP related to worker health and safety. BBP auditor Hector Brenes (1999, pers com) explained that before the project there was a fire hazard for the people working inside the packing station and they wore neither gloves nor protective clothing. In addition, COBAL had installed fumigation chambers for the application of post harvest fungicides (used to prevent 'crown rot' of bananas during shipment) instead of the previous system of application by hand (using dips or hand-held nozzles), with the intention of reducing worker exposure to the chemicals, and which also served to speed up this process, thereby increasing production potential (Rojas 1999b, pers com). Recognising the changes to health and safety, Roberto Mack (1999, pers com) remarked that "things have got a lot better. The difference between this plantation [El Roble S. A] and the way things were a few years ago is like night and day." These improvements to worker health and safety, although perhaps not sufficient, were tangible outcomes of the cumulative civil power of BBP participants *and* its critics who built consumer awareness through the international banana campaign (Chapter 6).

There is, however, a difference between worker welfare and labour rights. Many organisations in Euroban and Foro Emaus considered freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining to be the foremost social issues to be addressed in banana plantations, as this would hopefully allow all other issues to be addressed (see Chapter 6). Thus Foro Emaus wrote:

---

[185] Although there was a lot of evidence of significant changes to management practices in BBP certified farms, there was very little data to demonstrate what this meant in terms of environmental impact on rivers, soils, biodiversity, coral reefs and so on. For example, independent tests of water quality in the rivers which collect water from the plantations, or of drinking water quality on the plantations was lacking: at least it was not supplied to me, nor to researchers working on pesticides at Universidad Nacional. In 1999, scientists from Universidad Nacional told me they still detected high concentrations of pesticides in the rivers, and the coral reefs off the Atlantic Region (such as Cahuita) were almost completely dead. Whether ECO-OK plantations are part of the cause or the solution to these problems was in doubt, because of a lack of credible data.

what is clearly not 'O.K.' is the continuing persecution of labor unions on the banana plantations belonging to Chiquita, such as COBAL. The SITAGAH union has denounced many cases of union persecution with proofs before the Constitution Court, the Ministry of Work and the Labor Inspector and in 1997 Chiquita was sentenced in several cases. (1998a, p. 63).

In 1999, there was a lack of detailed indicators for freedom of association, indicating that this was not audited as thoroughly as other issues, a fact acknowledged by the program director:

The problem with social criteria is how does anyone check these things? We can define what is safe water quality, what is improved waste management, and we can measure these things. But with social issues its more difficult. (Wille 1999c, pers com).

This meant that until that time the auditing of social issues had relied on the unquestioned personal opinions of the BBP auditors. For example, at finca El Roble S.A., auditor Hector Brenes (1999, pers com) commented that the were no unions on the plantation as none of the workers wanted them, while the director of the union SITAGAH stated that:

El Roble has a strict security gate. I think that approximately 6 times unionists have tried to enter Roble over the past 3 or 4 years and not been allowed. We only have about ten people in El Roble affiliated to SITAGAH. I believe that if the management knew that then [the trade union members]... would be fired (Barrantes 1999, pers com).

The documentation describing the programme was also revealing of the priorities of the programme, suggesting that in dealing with social issues, they were working beyond their particular interest and expertise. For example, the opening paragraph of *Transforming Tropical Agriculture Farm by Farm* (CAN 1999c), a document about the mission of CAN, discussed the problems associated with tropical agriculture - various environmental issues were described but worker health and safety was only mentioned at the end of the paragraph, and there was no mention of other social standards relating to labour rights. By focusing on worker welfare provision by the company as opposed to issues of labour rights, BBP had not succeeded in resolving the social aspects of banana production to the satisfaction of the various stakeholders. Below I explain how the ability of CAN's staff to deal with the full complexity of social issues, including worker's rights, was constrained by their scientific backgrounds and focus on sustainable development. This is important as it illustrates that initiatives undertaken with civil intent and which exert civil power in a number of ways, can then expand in ways which do not enable our common good.

The Civil Effect on the Banana Trade Generally

We talk unabashedly about transforming the industry. We believe this is happening. Anything you read about the industry is wrong because it is changing so fast. 2 years ago is ancient history.
Chris Wille (1999c, pers com)

Writing two years after Chris said this, I have to agree with him. The fact that things were changing so fast was one of the reasons why I decided to write this thesis in the past tense, as I knew it would be a historical account as soon as I had finished it. Was BBP responsible for these rapid changes? On the one hand CAN and Chiquita staff claimed that the programme was

important in influencing Dole and Del Monte, as Chiquita was "big enough to move the industry" with the other companies "looking at Chiquita and copying the changes" (Wille 1999c, pers com). On the other hand, Bandeco's (Del Monte Costa Rica) environmental manager claimed that the initiative's impact on his thinking was "nil", and that he developed his ideas from attending environmental conferences in the West and deciding to pursue certification to ISO14001 (Miranda 1999, pers com). Opinions differed because of the competitive nature of the business, and the only 'objective' evidence of the wider influence of the BBP programme was that Del Monte appointed its first environmental manager in 1995, the year Chiquita publicly announced its work with Rainforest Alliance, and Dole only appointed its ISO14001 manager in 1997. How we interpret this is not objective, of course, and in my subjectivity I would argue that BBP was a contributing factor to the uptake of environmental programmes by the other companies.

The changes I am talking about here are not the changes necessary to create a sustainable banana trade. Industrial farming in the tropics was incredibly carbon intensive, requiring massive applications of chemicals (see Chapter 6). Thus many civil activists focused on encouraging the production and trade of organic bananas, which used no artificial chemicals. Moreover, the changes I am talking about were not the changes necessary to create an economically secure banana trade, as they did not deal with macro-economic pressures, the consolidation of shipping and marketing by TGCs, and problematic buyer-supplier relations (at every stage of the value chain, from independent producer to retailer). Thus many civil activists focused on encouraging the production and trade of fairtrade bananas (see Chapter 6). Some environmental civil activists, such as Fundacion Ambio's Felipe Carazo (1999, pers com) realised this and regarded BBP as a beginning, and a potential catalyst of further change: "if you start with a top standard you won't get industry involved. You have got to start and then improve" he argued. However, as Felipe realised, some civil activists involved in organic and fairtrade banana production became particularly concerned about how BBP might actually *inhibit* greater change in the banana trade by distracting attention from fundamental problems.

Chiquita compounded these concerns with inappropriate marketing of BBP bananas in Europe during the early nineties. One civil activist wrote that:

> *Chiquita has marketed the ECO OK program as 'the environmentally friendly alternative'... The brochure shows a front page picture of an untouched rainforest and further says that 'Chiquita bananas are grown according to nature's own premises...' Something which is felt over here to be a strong exaggeration and has provoked negative feelings (p. 11)... We feel that Chiquita's uncautious propaganda could endanger further improvements in the banana industry and the market for organic... bananas. (Dahlerus 1996, p. 10).*

Member organisations of Foro Emaus also felt concerned about the way the project was being advertised and argued that it had a "real challenge" to discredit it.

> *Foro Emaus...is forced to unmask this lie that affects the struggles of workers in general, and the possibility that small producers of real organic bananas... have priority in the markets of Europe and the United States (Vargas 1998).*

Here we see that 'facilitating change' and 'promoting change' strategies concerned many civil activists not because of what they achieved but because of what they threatened to prevent. The problem here is that in addition to wanting the utility benefits of working with a civil group, such as low cost expertise, a corporation's motivation for working with civil groups often included more 'political' factors, such as credibility, reputation and protecting their licence to operate. The attractiveness of civil groups as partners for a company related to their position within civil society and the corporation's need to demonstrate social responsibility. Consequently, no matter how specific the civil group's objectives, the corporate partner would always hope it released some of the pressure being felt from other civil activists. Therefore could civil action that was successful in exerting civil power to enable certain aspects of our common good then exert a non-civil power to inhibit other aspects of our common good?

Unintended Consequences of Civil Action

The development of the BBP program is an example of a civil group starting something in line with their expertise, interest and mandate from their supporters but which needed to evolve rapidly into areas that its staff were not entirely comfortable with. By 2000, the standard contained pages on worker health and safety, and very little on forest conservation, the initial motivation of Rainforest Alliance in launching the project. The scheme became an important one for banana agriculture and its stakeholders, but with limited importance for forest conservation:

> *Sometimes I wonder how we got into what has become a social certification programme: most of the criteria relate to worker health and safety - it's not why we started the project originally (Wille 1999c, pers com).*

Chris Wille explained that at first they "wanted to keep away from issues which were polemic, such as a fair wage, or union rights, because people had been fighting and dying with no good coming to anyone." Instead he wanted to focus on "what we could change." (Wille 1999c, pers com). Yet over time, because of the growing profile of the initiative and the growing criticism about labour practices, Chris decided to broaden the programme to include more social issues. There was also encouragement for this from Chiquita, given their interest in using BBP to demonstrate their overall responsibility. This is where some of the problems started.

As they began dealing with social issues, so CAN's accountability to stakeholders became more urgent. Before 1999 this was not recognised by CAN staff. For example, BBP stated its aim to "increase social benefits" and ensure workers receive "fair treatment and wages" (CAN 1999a, p. 1), but no mention was made of the constituencies who would have a valid input in determining what the social benefits, fair treatment and wages were. In a section entitled 'dialogue with critics' (p. 2), the argument was made that "certification programs allow... science-based solutions to problems" (p.2). It is questionable what science had to say about what constitutes fair treatment

and a fair wage. Whereas the secretariat could claim that they had the scientific and technical know-how to make decisions on what was 'safe', what was 'improved', in environmental terms, one can not claim to have *legitimacy for dealing* with social issues due to being a scientist.

This illustrates how CAN staff's professional background in environmental science influenced the way they dealt with social issues. They attempted to rationalise their work on social issues in terms of their commitment to sustainable development, which then shaped the way they understood labour relations. For example, Chris Wille argued that "a complete definition of 'agricultural sustainability' must include the rural communities, the farmers themselves, their families and workers" (1998a, p. 1). This was how most environmentalists, from all areas, were arriving at a consideration of 'the social' at the turn of the millennium: social issues were valued by the way they related to environmental issues. This approach framed the way social issues were addressed in a number of projects, so that certain principles of human rights, democracy and justice were downplayed or overlooked. For example, Chris argued that "issues such as fair prices for farm products, fair wages for workers, safe working conditions and rural community development are essential to the sustainability question" (Wille 1999b, p. 1). Although this may be so, these issues were important whether or not they had a theoretical link to sustainability (as are the issues of freedoms from discrimination, of association, and for collective bargaining). An approach which addressed workers' well-being because this improved their commitment to the environment was insufficient. As an environmentalist it took me a while to appreciate this fact myself.

Because of the way they had come at this issue the BBP staff did not at first recognise the key difference between worker welfare and labour rights. Labour rights are about workers having the *ability to shape their own circumstances* rather than relying exclusively on the good will of the company, if, when and to what extent the company decides to *extend such patronage*. As the ETI argued "employers need to move beyond paternalistic approaches and take on board the perspectives of workers" (ETI 1998c). This was a key issue in Costa Rica where many companies promoted the Solidarismo movement (Chapter 6). After the international banana campaign, the work of ETI and SAI, and my own intervention, CAN looked again at labour rights issues, which I will discuss below.

The positive and negative aspects of the discourse and practice of 'sustainable development' indicate that discourses and their associated practices can enable some aspects of our common good while inhibiting others. This raises a number of questions. First, what were the intentions of the people and organisations involved in sustainable development discourse and practice? I found them to be civil - in the sense of protecting the environment, a common good that underpins security, provides experiences, and for some conveys meaning and self-esteem (see Chapter 2). Therefore it seems that a civil intent for developing or disseminating a discourse or taking an associated action does not necessarily mean that there will be a civil effect. Instead, civil activists

can create discourses and practices that when extended beyond their initial focus, unknown to those activists, act in inhibiting ways.

This inhibiting effect arises as another civil discourse dealing with another aspect of our common good is downplayed. Both the concepts of 'sustainable development' and 'human rights' are civil concepts, relating to aspects of our common good, yet it was the former that was being used to frame discussions about social issues and workplace standards within BBP (and in a lot of other work at the turn of the millennium). This raises the question why certain discourses impelled by civil intent become more widespread than others. The reason is that some ideas and practices can meet resistance if they challenge certain power relations. Thus those ideas that meet less resistance are more likely to become a widely shared discourse. This does not mean that third-dimensional power is exerted against certain civil ideas, but it is those civil ideas that don't challenge (or pose less of a challenge to) certain power relations that gain more fourth-dimensional power. This support includes funding, collaboration and supportive policy statements and publications.

These findings give us insight into processes of social change. Many power relations in human societies are inhibiting of the collective pursuit of individual preferences, and serve to inhibit the preferences of the many in order to enable to the preferences of the few. Over the course of history, inhibiting power hierarchies have been institutionalised in human societies from monarchies, to empires, to dictatorships, to capitalist economies. Civil ideas and civil actions which do not challenge elements of the inhibiting power relations that seem to exist in any society, can therefore have both civil and uncivil effects. This is what happened in different ways in the cases of ETI, SAI and BBP. In the case of ETI, the initiative was a result of civil action yet its success in generating fourth-dimensional power was because it defined ethical trade as 'over there' in supplier factories and not 'over here' in the buyer-supplier relationship and so didn't threaten the power of retailers. Thus the power of the ETI was threatening to inhibit attempts at addressing this aspect of our common good. In the case of SAI, its professionalisation of social auditing was pursued out of a civil concern for workers' (particularly childrens') welfare, yet its success in generating fourth-dimensional power with commercial auditors and corporations was because it helped the former increase their power (profits) and the latter to defend their power, via superficial audits. Thus the power of SAI was threatening to inhibit other civil groups working to empower workers. In the case of BBP, the initiative was the result of civil concern for the environment, yet its success in generating fourth-dimensional power came from its acceptance of monoculture agriculture and its superficial approach to labour rights, which was not threatening to the power of Chiquita. Thus the power of BBP was threatening to inhibit other civil groups working on sustainable agriculture and empowering workers. Moreover, each of these initiatives gained fourth-dimensional power by not challenging capitalist transgovernmental corporations, industrial forms of production and consumerist society.

Does this mean that within a commercial society with powerful corporate interests, *if a civil idea* or action works in some way it must be inhibiting of another aspect of our common good? This is a *difficult question, but I would answer 'not if we become aware of the paradoxes inherent in our* civil actions and act accordingly'. The paradox arises because *civil ideas and actions can inhibit* our common good in two ways: *unknowingly* by a civil actor and *knowingly* by an uncivil actor. First, by not knowing how our civil actions relate to an encompassing conception of our common good we can inhibit a wider realm of civil actions (i.e. civil society). This was the situation in many instances described in this thesis, which is understandable given that there had been limited practical, professional or academic consideration of values at the time - and although inspired by their values, people remained in 'single-issue ghettos' and did not relate their work to a wider purpose, as coherently as they might.[186] Second, a discourse and practice that originally comes from civil action can be knowingly promoted for uncivil reasons, to protect or increase inhibiting power relations. This was the situation in many instances described in this thesis, as many people had their roles to perform in uncivil organisational forms.

The implications are that as civil activists we need to be careful of the extended and unintended consequences of our civil actions. As Chris Wille reflected (1999a, pers com):

> *Our experience makes us more cautious.., we must learn everything about an industry, its structure, supply chains, major players, history, issues, and so on before we become involved. We walked in like children to the banana industry. Who's influencial? Where's the power? We need to know all about the trade now.*

Another implication is that we should continually reflect on our values and intent: why do we do what we do and how does this relate to a broader notion of our common good, and all the other people taking civil action? Also important is to consider how people are using our civil action, what their values and intents are and what they are trying to achieve - recognising what their organisational roles demand of them and what discretion they might have within that role. This is challenging because, at the time of writing, it was not normal to talk about values in professional settings.[187]

I hope this analysis hasn't been too disheartening, because despite all the problems and concerns in the end all the initiatives and disputes described above actually seemed to work together. There was a strange synergy between civil activists, even if they were shouting at each other. With CAN collaborating on the inside and Foro Emaus with Euroban shouting from the outside, by 1999 Chiquita had undergone a conversion to corporate social responsibility and began to open up to its stakeholders. They had their first meeting with Foro Emaus in May 1999, participated constructively in the meeting I organised on social auditing in September 1999 and agreed to work

---

[186] This is the reason why when undertaking this thesis I decided to move out of the ghettos of 'sustainable development' and 'corporate social responsibility' and explore the potential of the term 'civil society' to facilitate a discussion of values and purpose in organisational life.

[187] This thesis is not intended to be an exploration of all the management implications of these findings, that will have to come later... by me or someone else.

with the ETI pilot project (Chapter 8). During 1999, David Mclaughlin, in their Latin American office reviewed the various codes of conduct developed by civil groups for social and environmental practices and helped draft a new code of conduct and set of core values for the company. By 2000, stakeholder dialogue was considered essential at the highest level, as illustrated by Chief Operating Officer Steven Warshaw's (2000, pers com) assertion on CNN that:

> *The question is where is the strong arm in the industry? And the answer is that the strong arm is not in our hands today. The way the banana industry operates today is very similar way to other industries -- that whether you are dealing with environmental groups, government units, or organised labour, if you can come up with a co-operative spirit that leads to mutual improvement, it works.*

I was mildly chuffed to have played a small part in that cultural change process, via my publications, seminars and meetings with various staff. This brings me to my own civil action.

My Civil Action

> *I think that most of the issues and criticisms [you] raised are valid, and we welcome any advice on how to better deal with any or all of them...With the clear vision of hindsight, there are many things we should have done differently, and we're working overtime to make improvements in the program, including those you have identified.*
>
> *Chris Wille (1999a)*

In keeping with my civil action-research approach, in August 1999 I wrote a paper called *Growing Pain?* (Bendell 2001a), which detailed many of the issues raised in this chapter, and sent a copy to Chris Wille. After reading that he acknowledged much of the analysis and many of the criticisms and invited me to work on advising CAN on how to improve the labour standards dimension to their certification scheme. I submitted a report in July 2000, with recommendations including proposed solutions to the question of CAN's mandate (discussing the potential of a rights-based environmentalism) and suggestions for capacity building and training in order for CAN to conduct social auditing credibly.

When writing that report I realised that we can never start from scratch - we are faced with the challenge of working with organisations that have histories, cultures, leaders and dependents. The challenge was to see how CAN could be brought forward from that starting point so that its extensive networks could further enable our common good and not inhibit the civil action of others. Should CAN have withdrawn from social auditing and focus only on environmental issues so it didn't distract from the work of IUF, ETI and others? This course of action would not have directly helped all those workers on CAN-certified farms - including those outside the banana trade and beyond Costa Rica. So should CAN have improved their criteria on labour standards, re-trained their auditors, convened local dialogues on social indicators, involved local stakeholders in auditing, and established dialogue at an international level, advocating for an accountable membership-based accreditation organisation to oversee work in this area (an 'agriculture stewardship council')? If so then this would have been a massive undertaking - where would the resources come from?! I remembered Chris's words in our first meeting when we discussed the

growing criticism from Euroban: "the problem is that we are a small [civil group] and developing the programme at ground level was difficult enough and took all our energies" (Wille 1999c, pers com). Thus I was reminded of the pressures of resource scarcity in the realm of civil action. My civil action in identifying ways forward could not be effective if the resources could not be obtained to implement those ideas. Additional revenues from the banana trade were unlikely, given the state of the banana market, and the other possible source of funding, charitable foundations, had their own agendas and bureaucracies to attend to.

Since the *Growing Pain?* report CAN began to re-address issues of local-level participation. They contacted critics such as labour-leader Gilbert Bermudez and environmentalist Yamileth Astorga, to open dialogue about the standards and the certification process. CAN were also proactive in offering to collaborate with the ETI pilot project in Costa Rica, with the hope it would help generate indicators for social auditing that would be acceptable to a wide range of stakeholders in the banana trade. At the international level, CAN opened up dialogue with other certification schemes such as the Fairtrade Labelling Organisation (FLO) and SAI. They prepared a comparison of these standards and emphasised that it "should be considered the start of a process rather than an endpoint" (Holst 1999, p. 1). In return, the position of the Europeans appeared to have mellowed. One director of a fairtrade organisation remarked to me in 1999 that "Eco-OK is OK in many respects. To get from A to B you need to start at A, so we recognise it's a start, but we still want to push, push, push for improvement."

The new spirit of dialogue both allowed, and was helped by, the formation of an Ad Hoc Working Group on Responsible Banana Production hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). This held its first meeting in Rome, April 2000, and all the standard-setting civil groups (CAN, FLO, SAI, ETI, IFOAM) agreed to collaborate where possible. I kicked off a process to prepare a joint brochure explaining our commonalities and differences of the various schemes, which was published a year later. Also in April 2000, CAN pushed for the new International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance to allow non-accrediting members, such as CAN, so it could participate in collaborative efforts to develop and promote independent ethical certification. I was the consultant for CAN at that meeting, and also attended the Women's Banana Conference for CAN in Hannover, Germany, in June 2000, in order to report back on the key issues that were of concern to women banana workers and their representatives.[188]

These were some of the positive things that were stimulated by the *Growing Pain?* report. However, in publishing it I also realised the limitation of research - any research - which should make us think carefully as civil action-researchers, when we publish something in our attempt to

[188] As I had hoped, these experiences have helped influence other aspects of CAN's work. As part of their development of a certification scheme for cut flowers CAN contracted me to review key stakeholders in the cut flower industry in Europe, including the organisations already developing certification schemes. Consequently

stimulate positive change. That limitation comes from the way we simplify complex situations. This happens not just through the way we interact with the world we research, which can never be a long or deep enough interaction, but also the way we simplify issues during the rationalisation of our ideas and the construction of our arguments. There is always a danger that through our simplification we overlook the complexity of personal emotions involved in any social situation. Not only did Chris Wille agree with the arguments in *Growing Pain?*, he also said:

> *I wish the report gave more credit to... the scores of farm managers, workers, BBP staff, volunteers, interns, consultants, and others who have for 7 or 8 years poured heart and soul into making things better for workers and wildlife on banana farms from Ecuador to Honduras. [I]t is disrespectful, in my opinion, to ignore the farm manager in Ecuador who got so enthused about reforestation that he is giving free seedlings to workers; to the administrative assistants on farms in Colombia who also serve as the environmental officer and take their new roles seriously; to the BBP manager on the farms in Santa Marta, Colombia, who daily risks her life and by night volunteers to help kids orphaned by the armed conflict; to the Bribri guy in Panama who is teaching indigenous workers in their own language about the hazards of agrochemicals... (1999a)*

When I put my researchers' hat on and analyse, deconstruct, reconstruct, and argue, I risk brushing aside the raw, complex, unruly, messy mesh of emotional life that so *is* human society and which resists neat and tidy analysis and two-dimensional presentation on a page of A4. Life escapes biography. So, perhaps, we will never be able to really understand people's 'power within' through academic analysis, no matter how great our civil intent, and maybe that's the way it should be. We can't live by the book.

One thing I gained from analysing the data and reflecting on my experience for this chapter was a moment of circularity, as I'll explain. I had not really thought before about how civil actions might not always have civil effects. I assumed that all uncivil effects were the result of uncivil actions. But now I realised civil actions could have both civil and uncivil effects, exerting civil and uncivil power. This was challenging. A key motivation for me to write this thesis was to have a real stab at defining civil society in a meaningful and positive way, and save it from the nihilism of numbers. So I thought 'oh no', my (not so) initial definition of civil society as the collation of civil actions or participations for our common good didn't necessarily mean that civil society was a good thing! Then I realised, I'd become completely focused on outcomes, about enabling our common good, rather than 'mere' intent. I was always asking "What's the influence, the power, the effect?!" I had overlooked how civil society could be about *trying*, rather than *succeeding* in delivering our common good. Perhaps the trying, the intent, is the most important thing anyway? Those words of Mother Teresa I read when I was 14, and quoted months ago when I first started writing this thesis in a shack in Nicaragua, suddenly became fresh again. "It's not what you do but how much love you put into doing it," she said. I wrote in Chapter 1: "Her attitude clashed vividly with the utilitarian view of society so dominant at the time. It emphasised to me the importance of *motivation* and *why* we do things." So it dawned on me... although my choice of topic and way of

---

discussions were opened with certification schemes such as the Flower Label Programme in Germany and the MPS in the Netherlands.

researching were shaped by my civil intent, my choice of research question made me look at civil actions in a utilitarian way. That's why I had not grappled with questions of values earlier in the research.

I've written up this thought process of coming to see civil society as concerning intents not effects as a way of illustrating the kind of reflexive thinking I did while writing and re-writing this thesis. It was one of many insights into concepts, definitions and methodology I gained from analysing the data and reflecting on my experience. I would read some of my notes, look again at an interview, read an earlier chapter, consider my working definitions, concepts and conclusions, and then change a concept, such as my understanding of power or civil society and then re-write 'the story' using the revised concepts. During that writing I'd realise something didn't work and then go back. This meant a reflexive process between sections traditionally delineated as literature review, methodology, data analysis and conclusions.

The result of this looping process could be that one decides to change the original research question! For example, I decided to focus on our common good instead of sustainable development while I was analysing my results and I began to see some of the problems with environmental approaches to social issues. The title of this thesis also reflects a slight change of emphasis. Although I sought to focus on "civil power" and asked the question "*how* was civil society influencing," during my analysis I realised the importance of reflecting on intent as much as effect. Therefore the active questions in my mind changed during the course of my research and action. This shows that there are as many answers in questions as answers to questions. In fact, the best answer is often a better question.

But now to that bit we label 'conclusions' if not answers...

CHAPTER ELEVEN. Paradoxes of Power in the Civilisation of Globalisation

In the last four chapters I used examples from the international banana trade to explore how civil society was influencing business for our common good. In this concluding chapter I do five things. First, I summarise some of the common findings from my case studies within the conceptual frame of civil society and power that I developed in Chapters 2 and 5 respectively. Therefore I discuss the first, second, third and fourth-dimensional power of civil action and reaction, which entails a combined considering of these latter two forms of power when exploring discourse.[189] In discussing discourse I commence my second aim of the chapter, which is to draw parallels with the findings of others working in various disciplines. My findings on co-optation, for example, echo the debates about social movements and NGO-state relations. This aids my third aim, which is to reflect on the wider questions I mentioned in Chapter 3, about whether civil society is co-opted and if it acts as an agent, or suppressor, of democracy. By doing this, paradox is shown as key, and pointing out the paradox of civil power is a fourth aim for the chapter. My fifth theme is more normative. From a recognition of paradox and the problems of co-optation, I argue that as agents in civil society we must attain greater self-realisation and adopt a restructuralist approach to our work. My final aim is to reflect on the benefits and drawbacks of my approach to methodology, to civil society and to power. In doing this I question the basis of western approaches to knowledge, which I expand in Annex I, a postscript-letter.

This thesis demonstrates the complexity of relations in society and how difficult it can be to determine what improves, why, whether this might prevent greater change and whether any positive changes will endure. In addition, whether we believe any of changes that may occur are due to 'the influence of civil society' will depend on our understanding of the meaning of 'influence' and 'civil society' and, therefore, the meaning of 'our common good'. Therefore, as I said in Chapter 4, any question begs more questions and in itself holds many answers. In defining 'influence', I re-worked sociological approaches to analysing power, outlining four dimensions of power (Chapter 5). I then defined power as that which either makes us or helps us to do or not to do, to say or not to say, to think or not to think, to feel or not to feel. With the concept of 'civil society', I suggested a normative definition, giving voice to those values I believed were implicit to many of the people acting in 'civil society'. In doing this I developed a notion of our common good (Chapter 2), from which I developed the notion of 'influence for our common good,' which I

[189] There were a number of ways I could have presented this analysis of power. For example, I could have presented the first, second, third and fourth-dimensional power of civil society, as a sector, over or with business, and then vice-versa. However, the key issue for me to discuss is the intent behind and effect of power rather than its mode of transmission or creation (to which the four dimensions refer to). I had found that civil power could be exerted by actors in any sector, and also resisted by actors and organisations in any sector. I realised that I could not explain the power of a civil action in any depth without considering the potential reactions to, and unintended consequences of, such actions. As Michel Foucault noted, "as soon as there is power there is the possibility of resistance. We can never be ensnared by power, we can always modify its grip"

defined as 'civil power' (Chapter 5). This is power that is civil in *both* intent and effect, which is important as I described forms of power with civil effects that did not arise from civil intent, and forms of power arising from civil intent yet without civil effects.

Whereas the first three dimensions of power are defined in terms of the mode of transmitting power, I distinguished the fourth dimension in terms of the creation of 'new' power. A problem with this conceptual framework arises as the power of thought, or discourse, is a mode of transmission that can be understood as either third or fourth-dimensional power, depending on whether one sees it as a plus-some or zero-sum relationship between the actors involved. Therefore in this chapter I combine discussion of third and fourth-dimensional power when considering discourse, and separate out the other aspects of fourth-dimensional power, such as skills, technology, emotional commitment and so forth (although these are embedded within, and reproduce, discourse).

It is important to note that my conceptualisation of power is, like *all* academic theory, a 'fiction,' to the extent that it is based on the mental constructs I devised to explain phenomena in ways that might inspire civil action. The concepts are my intellectual direct action to create mental tools of liberation.

The Power of Force: The First Dimension

The first-dimensional power of civil action proved difficult to assess, due to the complexity of relations and events and the fact that people had their own interpretations of events and the attitudes of others, and often presented an 'official' history that served their purposes. For example, somewhat contrary to Chapter 10, Chiquita began presenting its decision to work with SAI as a result of their positive experience of working with the Rainforest Alliance; it could equally be seen as a result of the problems they had working with the Alliance (problems they would need to be careful not to repeat with SAI).[190]

Nevertheless there was some evidence of decisions and action by civil actors that compelled business to act. In Chapter 7 I chronicled the campaign against a company that clearly compelled it act on ethical trading. In Chapter 10, I showed how another company was compelled to do *something* on environmental issues by local civil society in Costa Rica in 1992. But the nature of that something resulted from the civil action of individuals who developed BBP, through sharing power. That civil action was focused on one aspect of our common good, environmental protection, but with time they were compelled to do more on social issues, by other activists who

---

(Foucault, quoted in Halford and Leonard 2001). Therefore, I decided to frame the discussion in terms of the power of civil action and reaction.

[190] Another example was the history of SAI presented in *SA8000: A Guide to the Definitive Standard* (Leipziger 2001, p.12), which explained that the organisation developed out of the research and consultations of that book's author. This was contrary to the evidence presented in Chapter 9.

mobilised consumer pressure - a first-dimensional power. The specific method for implementing solutions was not compelled by these civil actions, and relied on the relationship between participants in BBP.

First-dimensional power might seem an appropriate way of describing a certification scheme, as the certifier, in this case the civil groups in the Conservation Agriculture Network (CAN), should have the power to pass or fail companies, and require corrective actions. Although there were some things that Chiquita had to accept from CAN, such as a complete ban on deforestation, the relationship was more collaborative and so first-dimensional power is not particularly helpful in understanding the relationship between CAN and Chiquita.[191]

Some companies responded by exerting their own first-dimensional power, in civil and uncivil ways. For example, retail companies began demanding that their suppliers begin working to an ethical trading agenda. Individual managers within targetted companies began using their positions to demand changes from subsidiary managers and suppliers. However, they also exercised their power in ways that seemed counter to our common good, such as one company cancelling the macro-agreement it had with a trade union, as well as sacking many of its staff and re-employing them on lower pay and conditions during a price-slump in 1999. Whether the company had a choice in this matter is something I discuss below in the context of the macro-economics of the trade. I did not focus on this dimension of power as I soon discovered that the impact of civil action would depend not on whether the companies responded, but how they responded. Hence the last three chapters focused on the 'promoting change' and 'facilitating change' activities of civil actors.

The Power of Seclusion: The Second Dimension

When Stephen Lukes (1974) described a second dimension of power he had in mind governmental bodies that restricted access to their policy-making processes and secluded themselves from certain interest groups and ideas. This meant they were able *not* to make decisions and *not* to take action on certain issues that had implications for those whose interests were excluded (Chapter 5). So how were civil actors using this form of power? As I mentioned in the last chapter, some civil actors had managed to secure seats at the policy making table and some even managed to own that table. For example, in Chapter 8 I described how there were effectively 'block votes' which was key in influencing the content of the base code of labour standards.

[191] The growth in demand for fairtrade bananas across Europe was also an example of first-dimensional power, working through consumers. A Eurobarometer survey carried out in all 15 EU states found that 74% of the EU population said that they would buy a fair trade banana if they were available alongside an ordinary banana. 37% said that they would be prepared to pay a premium of 10% above the price of ordinary bananas, if they were of the same quality and produced to fairtrade standards (European Commission 1997). Nevertheless, the actual market for fairtrade bananas remained a niche (Chapter 3).

In the early nineties, the Rainforest Alliance established the principle of civil group leadership in developing systems for endorsing social and environmental practices in the banana sector. It was not clear whether this second-dimensional power created a significant difference between BBP and other initiatives which didn't involve civil groups, such as ISO14001, as the civil groups involved in CAN used a lot of the expertise and ideas of their corporate partners. However, there is evidence from other research that the involvement of a wider range of civil actors in standard setting processes is important. Gill Seyfang (1999, p. 1) analysed codes to find that:

> *The most effective codes of conduct (in terms of representing workers interests) are those drawn up by, or in consultation with, workers' organisations (not necessarily trades unions, which are rare in export processing factories) and (other civil groups), and which are based on core ILO (International Labour Organisation) conventions but are flexible enough to meet local needs.*

She found that business association codes did not include the issues of freedom of association, collective bargaining and non-discrimination (cited in Jenkins 2000). Rhys Jenkins (2000) found that this reflected the majority of codes adopted by individual companies, which also did not cover the core labour standards established by the ILO. Claire Ferguson's (1998) study of company codes found that none of them made a clear commitment to systematic monitoring and independent verification. However, the ETI and SAI integrated core ILO conventions and the principle of independent monitoring, illustrating how civil groups had enhanced the potential contribution of these processes to our common good.[192]

This suggests that greater stakeholder participation in policy initiatives can be beneficial, even when the types of participants and issues that can be discussed are restricted. Nevertheless, the involvement of civil actors in these processes was not without complication. Some civil groups exerted their own second-dimensional power over other actors in civil society, by explicitly or implicitly excluding them from policy processes. For example, CAN and SAI did not include (or serve) certain civil groups that then made it possible for CAN and SAI *not* to have certain debates and *not* to make decisions on certain important issues. Therefore we see that by gaining second-dimensional power without a self-awareness of that power and a broad notion of our common good, civil actors could lose their civil identity. The problem here was the organisational self-interest of some civil groups. One retail manager remarked that civil groups "don't work together very well, which is a shock to us, we thought they were all nice and cuddly; they're all ripping each other's throats out for the limited pot of funds they've got". BananaLink's Alistair Smith (1999, pers com) criticised the organisational self-interest of some civil groups:

> *I regard (civil groups) in the North as dispensable - we should all be working to make ourselves redundant: built-in obsolescence. But because of their size and established nature big (civil groups) are politically cautious. The world trading system is unjust and either you set out to change it or you don't. Some (civil groups) seem more worried about how they appear.*

---

[192] On the other hand some civil actors withheld their participation or agreement in order not to help legitimate a process. In Chapter 8 I described how the trade unions in Costa Rica exercised this power by refusing to participate in a multi-stakeholder process I had proposed, because of their concern with who would control the process, and who would participate.

My finding here about the problem of civil groups becoming self-interested in ways that held-back change reflects previous studies on non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and new social movements, which I discuss further below. In this instance, the problem was compounded by the way companies worked with certain civil groups and issues but not others. A recurring theme in my discussion of the ETI, SAI and BBP, was how some voices were ignored or downplayed. If someone ignores, downplays or marginalises a certain perspective then this is a form of second-dimensional power. When SAI did not respond to criticism of monitoring methodologies, for example, or when ETI did not address the argument that it should focus on buyer-supplier relations, they were exerting a form of second-dimensional power that was helpful in maintaining their emergent epistemic communities. These groups were also promoting approaches that were adopted by others, thus exerting a third-dimensional power, via discourse. This is not to say that they were not also exerting fourth-dimensional power with different actors in different ways at the same time, and thereby aiding our common good in some ways. Moreover, people in ETI, SAI and CAN were themselves being exposed to third-dimensional power, arising from commercial interests, commercial logic and commercial discourse. I will now discuss this question of how discourse more closely.

The Power of Thought: On the Boundaries of the Third and Fourth Dimensions

In this thesis, I have analysed the way different civil actors were framing issues, the way different people in businesses were re-framing issues, and the way they were being jointly framed in collaborative initiatives. The way these different frames were gaining acceptance or being marginalised indicated the power flows between different actors in businesses and civil groups. The joint institutions that were established by some businesses and civil groups, such as CAN, ETI and SAI, represented an embodiment of these flows, and so I examined their formation and internal processes, as well as the implementation of their proposals and outputs, such as workplace assessment systems. All the policies and practices I studied were produced by, and re-produced, an emergent discourse or way of thinking on what could be expected of a large western corporation at the start of the 21st Century. This discourse can be understood in both third and fourth-dimensional ways, with civil actors as agents or objects of discourse-shaping processes. In this section I first consider how civil groups and actors were agents of power and then how they were subjected to power, in both cases discussing whether this was third or fourth-dimensional power.

Discourse and Civil Actions

The civil group staff involved in the initiatives I have described helped shape the intentions and interests of the business people they interacted with. For example, CAN influenced the way Chiquita thought about environmental, and to a lesser extent, social issues, with knock-on effects

on the thinking of its competitors. In Chapter 7 and 8 I discussed how civil campaigning led to companies accepting some responsibility for the practices of their suppliers. They also helped develop a discourse of 'corporate social responsibility' (CSR) whereby some managers believed their companies needed a socially 'good' reputation and even regarded social and environmental issues as a source of opportunity. Campaigning led some managers to recognise a necessity for transparency and to abide by international standards, such as those established by the ILO. Civil action also helped establish the idea of multi-sectoral participation in voluntary corporate responses to societal issues. My finding echoes Robert Chambers (1997) argument that civil groups were responsible for the explosion of interest in a wide range of participatory methodologies in international development work. This suggests that we are not prisoners in Michel Foucault's (1979) panopticon of discourse, but that we can reshape it.

Should we consider this power of civil action on discourse and thus business, a form of third-dimensional power? The concept suggests exertion of a power 'over' another, whereas the new ways of thinking and acting that companies developed from relations with civil groups were arguably 'win-win' - in keeping with their organisational self-interest. As the evidence in Chapter 3 indicated, this 'win-win' was not known for certain. To illustrate, BBP's restriction on deforestation to establish new plantations was not something that would aid production, and so whether we consider it a beneficial move for Chiquita would depend on suppositions about the extent of public relations damage if Chiquita had continued deforesting, and other aspects of the business case.[193]

At the individual level of a business*person* we could regard these discourse-shaping processes as fourth-dimensional power, even if the business case was unproven, as it was helping people to access ideas that then liberated them to take civil action. Even so, for us to think this requires a certain view of human nature - that all people have a capacity and inclination for pursuing the collective interest, once awoken to this, and that the pursuit of that collective interest is in their own interest. This returns us to the existential questions I discussed in Chapter 2. Therefore even our understanding of the dimensions of power eventually requires us to reflect on spiritual questions. Hence your, or my, understanding of the nature of power will depend upon how we understand our own existence. And as our understanding of existence shifts so will our knowledge of the world, even though that world has not changed. I cannot help but think my education had failed me so miserably that only now I stumbled across such simple truths (see Annex I).

Discourse and Uncivil Reactions

It is possible to look at the discourse of CSR in a completely different way, by considering how it was shaped by *reactions* to civil action. Might the CSR discourse have been exerting third-

[193] In addition, whether the discourse of reputational risk-management was a form of third or fourth dimensional power can not be known, as the (extent of the) business case for reputational management was disputed, and in any case would require supposition based on 'what if a company had done x instead of y?'.

dimensional power over civil activists, by defining the problem and solution in a way that distracted us from working on more fundamental changes? Two parts of my analysis in this thesis suggested as much - how the commercial interests of service providers and retailers shaped the social auditing and ethical trading agendas respectively. I will briefly re-cap on these findings and what they suggest about understanding power.

First, in Chapter 9 I demonstrated how commercial audit companies helped devise systems for inspecting workplaces that enabled them to operate profitably. I showed how commercial factors influenced the methodology of audits in ways that restricted change and marginalised local civil groups. This was big business, with one commercial audit company had already completed thousands of workplace inspections in China by 2002. Retailers and brand-name companies were using commercial audit companies to a much greater extent than the civil groups who were pioneering alternative forms of monitoring. The specific audit companies and managers involved may or may not have been trying intentionally to marginalise such local groups. However, by pursuing their commercial interests and thus shaping the discourse around social auditing, they exerted an uncivil power over civil groups and actors. This demonstrates the importance of the concept of 'power over' when considering discourse, and hence the problem of treating discourse merely as the product of plural interactions, as post-structuralists tended to (Chapter 5).

Second, in Chapter 8, I demonstrated that when pushed to respond the retailers helped to define the 'ethical trade' agenda in ways that downplayed the importance of buyer-supplier relations. The problem was defined as 'over there' in supplier factories and plantations, rather than 'over here', in the purchasing practices of companies at the top of the supply chain. Around the same time in North America, the Maquila Solidarity Network (MSN, 2000) criticised the Fair Labor Association (FLA) and Worldwide Responsible Apparel Partnership (WRAP) for "subcontracting responsibility" for labour standards, and avoiding the critical issue of what buyers demand from suppliers, and how much they pay them. Retailers "are not required to take responsibility financially or otherwise for the conditions which have been fostered by their own subcontracting strategy," they wrote (Maquila Solidarity Network (MSN) 2000).

Despite this, most civil activists working on the multi-stakeholder initiatives described in this thesis did not speak about this issue. I suggested they were susceptible to this limiting CSR discourse particularly because they wanted to be 'practical'. In defending the FLA, Bama Athreya (2000) argued that they needed "immediate, practical solutions". While the need for a tangible programme of action was clear, 'immediate, practical solutions' were, by definition, those that met the least resistance, and gained the most support. Conversely a solution, which generated resistance from a powerful group would not seem so practical. Moreover, its development would not be supported with resources from the powerful group and thus it might not be developed as immediately as a 'solution' that was supported. In addition, those people or groups drawing upon

the powerful group's information, ideas, and/or funding might come to regard the practicality and immediacy of proposed solutions in the same way - i.e. be subject to third-dimensional power. This is important because *if a key cause of the problem being addressed is the concentration of power in one group, then there is a risk that practical and immediate 'solutions' will be both superficial and ineffectual.*

The issue of buyer-supplier relations leads us to even wider questions. The average Latin American banana worker received 1-2% of what consumers paid (Smith 1997a). This was the result of a number of factors, including the power of banana companies over the governments of banana-producing countries, given the lack of co-operation between those governments, and the growing power of retailers over the banana companies.[194] Therefore, one campaigning group argued that "beyond the welcome moves in some quarters towards implementing better social and environmental standards, there needs to be far more concerted attempts to tackle the issue of economic sustainability" (BananaLink 2000, p. 2). Without macro-economic changes the small steps being taken due to civil regulation could be rolled back. This was illustrated in Chapter 7, where the agreement between one company and trade union was effectively cancelled when the company responded to a sharp price-slump.[195] That agreement had resulted from a media-oriented direct action campaign in the UK, with the dumping of banana skins at Del Monte's head-office (Chapter 7). This 'power of pong' was blown away by the winds of global capitalism. So we could say that the CSR discourse was wrongly making some civil activists think that voluntary action beyond narrow cost-saving and marketing measures, could endure within a global deregulated market, and that this would distract them from focusing on more fundamental changes to the global economy.

The banana trade was typical of the power relations in global trade in agricultural products. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) reported at the time that:

> *Prices of agricultural commodities have been on an almost continuous decline since 1980, and since developing countries are heavily reliant on agricultural exports... falling commodity prices have contributed greatly to their difficulties... Annual losses in purchasing power due to deteriorating terms of trade are estimated to cost developing countries US$2.5 billion a year and mean that countries have to run faster merely to stand still (2000, p. 35).*

Addressing the key relations that were producing this situation might have been the most 'practical' way of tackling poor social and environmental conditions on the ground in a way that might

---

[194] The Union of Banana Exporting Countries (UPEB) was established to regulate supply in order to stabilise prices but years of lobbying from the banana companies along with changes in international trade law meant that it never achieved this mandate and in June 2000 became a forum for the exchange of information on labour, social, health and environmental issues (BananaLink 2000, p.4). The ILO noted that "concerted opposition from industrialised countries was (and is) not the least of factors militating against" agreements aimed at regulating supply (ILO 2000, p. 36).

[195] This was not that unusual. The International Union of Food and Agriculture Workers (IUF) reported that "unionized banana workers in Guatemala, for example, are now being told that their hard-won collective agreements are 'too expensive' in comparison with non-union production under appalling conditions in Ecuador" (IUF 2001).

endure. This would suggest looking at redressing the power relations in the supply chain, and redressing the power of some companies over countries, over their suppliers and over their workers. Yet the break-up of the banana transgovernmental corporations (TGCs), the promotion of cooperative forms of ownership, regional production quotas and less-industrial forms of production were not on the agenda. They were beyond the pale for the corporate participants in dialogue and initiatives on 'ethical trade'. What, then, does this tell us about the true power of dialogue, participation and partnership?

Common Themes on Discourse and Power

This discussion of how discourse was shaped in ways that inhibited action, how this was due to some actors' commercial interests and, therefore, due to the form of capitalism at the time, resonates with findings from research on environmental policy, management studies and international development.

In Chapter 8 I outlined the contention some made that inter-sectoral dialogue could create new forms of power, through new understandings and the creation of consensus through deliberation. This idea of 'communicative rationality' was particularly popular in environmental studies (Healey 1997). Although BBP, SAI and ETI were all sites of deliberation, they all set parameters on this, and involved actors pursuing their interests within the context of the social and environmental problems being addressed. The dialogue existed within the parameters of possibility defined by the capitalist system and the commercial interests of key participants. Therefore the outcome of these dialogues could not be considered to be a freely thought-out rationality, but a new understanding and set of recommendations that would not, knowingly, challenge existing power relations. My findings echo those of previous criticisms of 'communicative rationality' in environmental policy-making as having a naïve understanding of power relations (Cochrane 1996). They echo also the critical voices from management studies, who pointed out how employee participation in corporate management was 'post facto' as the key priority of a for-profit company was already prescribed (Taylor 2001).

A basic assumption of 'communicative rationality' was that consensus could be reached through a deliberative approach (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998). This automatically rules out certain options that some participants could never agree to, not because of their personal beliefs or assumptions, but because of their *roles* in organisations with specific objectives. If those objectives were themselves the reason why some views were marginalised, the "search for consensus... could silence rather than give voice to those already marginalised" (Holmes and Scoones 2000, p. 33). Previous research suggested this was particularly likely where the values and interests of some parties were subordinated, knowingly or unknowingly, to those of more powerful, articulate or persuasive actors in the participatory process (Smith and Wales 1999). I found this occurred, as

some Southern stakeholder groups already in weak positions of power in international supply chains were marginalised from the deliberations in the various initiatives chronicled in the previous chapters. Therefore, I found that processes of multi-stakeholder dialogue aimed at finding consensus could result in some stakeholders gaining more influence. In this way, dialogue could be seen as enabling resistance to the exertion of civil power, rather than the enabling the creation of civil power.

Similar criticisms were made of the practice and theory of participatory approaches to policy-making in Southern countries. Nicholas Hildyard (2001) and his colleagues argued that unless such processes take into account the relative bargaining power of so-called stakeholders, they can provide opportunities for the more powerful. Others noted that specific multi-stakeholder initiatives can be individualistic and ignore structural determinants (Francis 2001), especially as one's perception of possibility shape one's views (Mosse 2001) and the position of some means that they may not perceive the processes shaping their reality (Kabeer 1994).[196] Therefore Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari argued that "acts and processes of participation [such as] sharing knowledge, negotiating power relationships, political activism... can both conceal and reinforce oppressions and injustices" (Cooke and Kothari 2001, p. 13). Meanwhile, some asked us to consider what it is people are empowered to do through participatory processes: to legitimate a form of capitalism, a hydrocarbon-based, and therefore unsustainable, civilisation; to participate more effectively in the commercialisation of all that exists? Is that really empowerment? (Henkel and Stirrat 2001).

Therefore, we must question the post-structuralist argument that the creation of discourse can be a plural non-coercive process (Hayward 1998) and therefore understood as fourth-dimensional power (Gaventa and Cornwall 2001). As I demonstrated in Chapters 8 and 9, although we might find discourse was created by plural interactions, it was still shaped by commercial interests working through those interactions. In the words of Padre Doncel, who was talking to researcher Maria Furugori about voluntary initiatives from the banana companies, "the workers have no way of protecting themselves from anything that the company feels isn't in their interest" (quoted by Furugori 1997).

This analysis does not mean that things were not achieved through dialogue - I have demonstrated in this thesis that they were. What it means is that these achievements should be understood in context, so they might be regarded as bandages on, rather than a cure for, the problems of the global economy. The issue then is how the outputs of inter-sectoral dialogues and voluntary certification schemes were being presented to, and understood by, a wider audience. In criticising voluntary codes of conduct, people sometimes made the argument that the existence of codes

suggested that TGCs and not governments could and should ensure social justice and environmental sustainability (Klein 2000; LARIC 1999). In response, some argued that codes were never meant to supplant governmental action. However, BananaLink's Alistair Smith (1999, pers com) said he detected "an antipathy for government and a lack of awareness of the role of government within [civil groups]." Moreover, some intergovernmental agencies were beginning to claim that voluntary initiatives would deliver social and environmental outcomes, with the implication that they did not need to do anything else to ensure this. For example, in a paper on sustainable agriculture the ILO argued "the globally transmitted demands of consumers that the food they eat, the beverages they drink, and the flowers they give be produced 'safely' – safely for workers, the environment and themselves" was highly significant (2000, p. 38). In the five conclusions on policy actions, they made no mention of governmental action, stating instead that "developing countries will increasingly have to conform to basic labour standards in response to heightened consumer awareness of conditions of work in export agriculture" (ILO 2000, p. 53). This illustrates the unintended consequences of civil action, which I mentioned in Chapters 9 and 10.[197]

This discussion about discourse and power, context and unintended consequences, have implications for questions about whether civil society would be co-opted by its engagement with business, and whether it could be an agent or inhibitor of democracy (Chapter 3). I develop these two issues below, but first consider the non-(or less-)discursive aspects of fourth-dimensional power.

The Power to Get it Done: Other Aspects of the Fourth Dimension

There are aspects of fourth-dimensional power, such as skills, technology, resources and emotional commitment that are not in themselves 'discourse', although they are embedded within, and reproduce, discourses. After Naila Kabeer (1994) and Janet Townsend (1999) I described these aspects of fourth-dimensional power as 'power to do,' 'power with' and 'power within' (Chapter 5). In this section I summarise some of the findings on fourth-dimensional power.

In Chapters 7 and 8, I described the importance of international networking by civil groups when coordinating campaigns that raised consumer awareness of problems in the plantations and factories where products came from. Networking amongst different types of civil groups was important, whether at the national level in Costa Rica, as illustrated by Foro Emaus (Chapter 7), or in Britain, as illustrated by the Monitoring and Verification Working Group (Chapter 8): as

[196] This has implications for participatory action-research, which was becoming the norm for all action-research (Chapter 4). Such an approach research might downplay the value of the researchers' knowledge that arises from existing outside a particular situation and having the time and resources of intellectuals (Mohan 2001).

[197] The way discourses, like the one around partnership, can have different implications in different contexts compounds the confusion around whether we can describe new ideas and agendas as the result of third or

important were the international linkages being forged by such groups. The trade unions built alliances such as Colsiba and the IUF. Europeans formed networks such as Euroban, which then cultivated links with Southern networks so they could be heard in consumer countries. This networking and solidarity was key to generating the power that made the activities in Chapters 7 to 10 possible.

The next step for many civil groups was to engage the private sector, through tactics described as producing, forcing, promoting and facilitating change (Chapter 3). People involved in promoting or facilitating change with business often spoke of new capacities to take action as a key benefit of those collaborations. In the previous chapter I described instances where actors in civil groups were providing or sharing new skills and knowledge to help business to act. This process was reflexive, so that businesspeople also provided civil group staff with new forms of power. In the ETI, for example, civil groups provided expertise on labour rights issues, as well as credibility for ethical trading policies. On the other hand, businesspeople provided civil groups with a new means of promoting improvements in workplace practices in the South. Similarly with the BBP, the staff of the civil groups in CAN provided Chiquita with additional knowledge on environmental management, and added some credibility for their work. In addition to generating 'power with' Chiquita, CAN learned from this relationship so that it then had 'power to do' certification work in other sectors, such as citrus fruits, coffee, flowers and tourism. SAI also gained expertise and finance from its corporate partners in the development of SA8000, which gave it credibility amongst the wider corporate community. However, as this last example reminds us, whether the created power was civil or not depended on how it was then applied (or not applied).

In this thesis, I have shown that the power being created through partnership between businesses and civil groups was being exerted on others in first, second and third-dimensional ways, as well as creating fourth-dimensional power in other areas. An example of first-dimensional power was where, because of their collaboration with civil groups, a company would require a supplier to change its practices in order to obtain or maintain a contract. An example of second-dimensional power can be seen in the way that the existence of business-civil group collaboration in some initiatives, meant that industry-led initiatives widely regarded as less credible. However, fourth-dimensional power created through collaboration was not necessarily exerted in civil ways, as we saw when collaborating businesses and civil groups exerted second-dimensional power in excluding certain interest groups and opinions. This was a key finding in Chapter 9, as it means that a civil group should not automatically think that it is successful because it is gains more of an influence and capacity to pursue its objectives, and that as observers we should not see the creation of power by a civil group as inherently enabling of our common good. It depends on how this power then affects other civil actors.

---

fourth-dimensional power. We begin to see such categorisation as an impossible task, given that there is infinite context in a complex system like human society.

The other aspect of fourth-dimensional power is 'power within' (Chapter 5). Therefore one issue I looked at was how civil actors were inspiring others to become civil actors themselves. Different managers in Costa Rica and UK mentioned their personal desire to play a constructive role in promoting sustainable development and social justice, as they saw it, and how civil campaigns had woken them to what they could do in their companies (Chapter 8). In Chapter 10, I mentioned how civil actors unleashed the 'power within' different people across Latin America, as they became enthused with the importance of conserving their environment.

Engagement between the civil and private sectors also had an effect on some of the civil group staff, giving them a new confidence to advocate, negotiate, and work toward change with the private sector. However, this is where we find that unleashing one's 'power within' is not necessarily something with a civil effect. This is because this power came from people believing in notions of 'professional conduct' that were equated with the private sector, so civil actors aspired to be 'business-like'. What did this mean? Although this depended on the culture, it did mean some useful attributes such as clarity, specificity and directness. However, it also implied being 'reasonable' and 'pragmatic', not 'emotional' or 'ideological.' I gave an example of this in Chapter 8, where a campaigner put me down for being too 'hectoring' of business, but I had many more experiences of this in social and professional settings during the years I worked on 'corporate social responsibility.' Hence the 'power within' released by a civil actor becoming more accustomed to the ways of the private sector could also be regarded as a power over them, by shaping their way of being, thinking and acting. After Michel Foucault's analysis of the panopticon gaols (1979), we could call this 'prisoner-professionalism', as it meant people self-disciplined themselves because of their notions of appropriate professional behaviour.[198]

On aspect of this prisoner-professionalism was to regard the idea of participation and partnership as 'good', and therefore to consider not doing such things as being irresponsible, unprofessional and, perhaps, even immoral. This 'professional' perspective was strong in development policy-making (Cleaver 2001; Cooke 2001; Henkel and Stirrat 2001). Prisoner-professionalism was particularly problematic when people left civil groups to work in the private sector as 'CSR specialists.' They perceived themselves still as civil actors but could only participate in CSR issues, in their work, in a way that met their employer's expectations of day-rates and a client-first focus. The implications of this for social auditing were spelled out in Chapter 9. This issue requires more research, but my concern has been explored in the development policy field, where

[198] This was reinforced by economic relations. Business had money. Although this thesis is about civil power, not many people in civil groups believed they had much power, especially in relation to the private sector. Instead, many civil groups were used to asking nicely of businesses and rich people for donations, and being grateful when they received them. Our society was compelled to respect those groups and people with financial resources, because we needed financial resources to achieve our ends. Therefore many civil group's freedom of expression in relating to business was inhibited by a deferential predisposition. This 'begging bowl' mentality, coupled with the desire to appear 'business-like,' led some civil groups not to ask for what they might when they engaged with business. This was my sense of what had happened when the ETI was established, and why I was

despite supposedly progressive rhetoric development professionals were argued to be "still engaged in the construction of a particular reality - one that at root is amenable to, and justifies, their continued existence and intervention within it" (*Cooke and Kothari 2001, p. 15*).

With this, we come full circle. The same processes we might consider as releasing fourth-dimensional power are also expressions of third-dimensional power, if we change our frame of reference. Moreover, the same processes we might consider as exerting civil power are also expressions of uncivil power, if we expand our frame of reference. There are two implications here. First, is that this conceptual framework for understanding power works: it was important to separate out the intention and effect of a form of power from the mode of its transmission or 'dimension.' This is because any action and any form of power can be understood as enabling or inhibiting of our collective pursuit of individual preferences, depending on context, and it is misleading to assume any dimension of power to be more value-able than another (Chapter 5). The second implication is that this conceptual framework for understanding power does not work: most phenomena can be understood as instances of any power-dimension, civil or uncivil, depending on the scope of your study and your values. The paradoxical nature of this paragraph illustrates the paradox inherent in human cognition: all conceptualization is fallible, as it arises from our effort to order the world rather than recognising it at one inter-related whole in continual flux and motion (Chapter 4). Consequently these efforts can cause us mental stress, as we struggle to fit experience into our neat notions of what exists. As I discuss in Annex I, a release from this 'knower's angst' can come from recognising both the futility of our quest for ordered-knowing and the fact that paradox is inherent in most concepts and actions. In the concluding section of this thesis I explore the paradox of civil action more closely, but first let us consider the extent of civil society's 'co-optation and thus its relationship to democratisation.

Civil Society, Democracy and Co-optation

In Chapter 3, I quoted *The Economist* magazine fretting over whether there was "a dangerous shift in power to unelected and unaccountable special interest groups." Debates raged about whether civil group were agents or inhibitors of democracy (Brecher and Costello 2002; Castells 1997; Hirst 1994; the other side Messner 1998; one side included Tarrow 1994; Wahl 1998). I the hoped that associative forms might create supplementary means for the dis-empowered in global supply chains to achieve greater control over their working lives. The title of my concluding chapter in *Terms for Endearment* (Bendell 2000c) was therefore the question "Civil regulation: A new form of democratic governance for the global economy?" Based on the analysis in the previous chapters the answer has to be "not really" - at least not at the time of writing. Instead, we might see it as a form of crisis management for a global governance disaster.

---

frustrated and surprised that the civil groups were not holding out for more specific commitments from companies (Chapter 8).

In the previous chapters I demonstrated that only certain types of civil actor were able to access the novel flows of power in the globalising world. The key processes I described were shaped by people with little legitimacy - in the sense of accountability and mandate – but who were able to do this because of their knowledge, skills and entrepreneurial spirit which allowed them to put issues in an acceptable way for funders, governments and business. Civil regulation was a form of governance by an elite who had the knowledge, vocabulary, ideas, energy and somehow 'looked right' because of their culture and status. Similar concerns were being raised in the context of civil society's influence over governments and international organisations (Simmons 1998; Wahl 1998). Therefore, I concur with Marina Ottaway (2001) that this threatened a new global corporatism. She suggested that despite claims about the potential of intersectoral partnerships to:

> *introduce greater democracy in the realm of global governance, it is doubtful that close cooperation between essentially unrepresentative organizations - international organizations, unaccountable NGOs and large transnational corporations - will do much to ensure better protection for, and better representation of, the interests of populations affected by global policies (ibid).*

In its extreme form, corporatism is fascism, where 'fascism' describes a political philosophy where the powerful in society should decide what is in the interests of the whole of society (sometimes with their own sense of being responsible). This nascent quasi-fascist global governing coalition was fed by processes of co-optation. The terms 'co-optation' or 'co-option' are not ones I used in this thesis, yet many of the processes affecting the agenda and priorities of civil actors could be described in such terms. If we grouped all civil actors and groups working on labour rights, for example, as constituting a 'new social movement' then the way that certain actors and groups gained power at the expense of others could also be understood as the co-optation of the movement. Seen in this way my research findings echo the arguments made elsewhere about co-optation of social movements.

For example, feminists have written extensively about the co-optation of the women's movement (Cornell 1999; Jahan 1995; Taylor 2000), and environmentalists about the co-optation of their movement (Chatterjee and Finger 1994; Finger 1992; Welford 1997). A common theme is that when centres of power engage with social movements, they incorporate those issues and groups in ways that do not appear to challenge their power, while marginalizing those that might. This process works at both personal and organizational levels.

In his study of grassroots movements in Latin America, Joe Foweraker argued that changes in political systems from authoritarian to democratic meant that civil groups became more often directly funded by the State, with "the price" being "a loss of their capacity to maintain a critical stance to promote alternative development projects" (2001, p. iii). He found they had become "increasingly preoccupied with their own financial survival, often to the detriment of the constituencies they [were] meant to serve" (ibid). Development analysts also pointed to such processes at a global level, where civil groups were becoming "too close" to Northern donor

organizations thereby creating less responsibility toward Southern states and less interest in asking 'radical' question about solutions to poverty (Hulme and Edwards 1997). Similarly, Ann Hudock (1999) found many civil groups in the South were not accountable to grassroots interests because they needed to be more aware of grant-givers' priorities and appear attractive to them. Ronnie Lipschutz and Judith Mayer (1996) not only considered the role of state-funding, but also how civil groups were increasingly carrying out the inspection activities of the state, such as environmental certification. They pointed out that although many civil groups started in opposition to the state, they had become mutually constitutive with it. My research shows that the same can be said about civil groups and the private sector. As companies moved from a closed and overtly "authoritarian" approach to a more open and collaborative one, so civil groups became partners, sub-contractors, inspectors, and when funding was involved, co-dependents. I would not go as far as Laura MacDonald (1994) in suggesting that civil groups legitimated the status quo, but they allowed some to regard a certain degree of change as legitimate. Moreover, my findings concur with those of Alexander Cooley and James Ron (2002) that civil groups acted in self-interested and competitive ways, which led to the de-politicising and westernising of issues and movements.[199] As Saskia Sassen (1998) suggested, this created an elite stratum of civil groups that helped shape the norm for other civil groups to follow if they wanted to access international funding: a form of cultural imperialism.

In this thesis I have shown that such co-optation cannot be understood only at the organisational level, but also at the personal level. As activists, we seek to be active - and effective. Most civil actors will therefore pursue opportunities where they might be heard and have some effect. Therefore sources of finance, and powerful partners are attractive to some. Nicanor Perlas (2002) identified this as a vulnerability of some activists, "a secret fatal attraction for the perks of economic and political power." An activist with this "soul illness" will "enter dialogue, negotiations, and/or partnerships with blinders that make it difficult to see the co-optation that slowly coils around an unsuspecting victim" (ibid). This relates to the activist ego. Some of the civil group staff I encountered did not consider their accountability to be an issue - they were accountable to their beliefs, which had led them to their choice of career in the first place. This feeling, which I was aware of in myself, makes it difficult for us to stay grounded and not form a new elite, whether working on ethical trading, social auditing or some other phenomena being defined by large institutions. There are conclusions here for how we might use civil power, as well as for the types of cooperation and action needed, which I will return to below.

Some might question the relevance of this past history of co-optation, arguing that a unique point in time arrived with the revolution in global communications technology. The argument,

[199] With examples from the areas of humanitarian relief, prisoner of war protection, and development aid they suggest that the large, well-funded, western NGOs developed processes requiring compliance from staff and beneficiary communities that depoliticized the motivations and objectives of individual activists and, more broadly, depoliticized international political movements.

mentioned in Chapter 3, was that the Internet meant information was more available and, therefore, was 'democratised.' Although processes of co-optation might occur, they would be transparent to people on the 'outside'; who would therefore hold them to account. With this research I have shown that information was indeed becoming more available, and people were able to communicate and organise across borders to produce and communicate their information. However, I also found that some people had more access to this information than others and that some people's interpretations of that information were more valued than others. For example, the companies involved in the various social initiatives were interested in a particular type of information, which they considered valid. This was information produced through a certain framework based on a spurious notion of objectivity. What 'objectivity' really meant was a particular subjectivity that could be understood and accepted by those making the decisions. As such, the companies were really only valuing information and 'knowledge' that they wanted to accept, given their roles in commercial organisations. This was so important to the companies that they often spent their limited budgets for ethical trade matters on expensive commercial audit firms. Therefore we see that whose reality counts depends on who counts reality. Although access to information was being democratised the 'knowers' of that information still existed within, and perpetuated, undemocratic hierarchical systems.[200]

The Paradox of Civil Action

In Chapter 3 I described the debate about whether civil groups could aid a transition to a sustainable and just society by working with corporations. Each side of the debate could draw upon evidence to show that civil groups were being co-opted (Rowell 2001) or creating important change (Zadek 2001). In that chapter I was implicitly suggesting that my research was important as I could then rejoin this debate on one-side or the other. Instead, my research suggests that we can rejoin the debate on both sides. By working with corporations civil groups were being co-opted, while at the same time helping to create a slightly more sustainable and just society. I found evidence of both the benefits and drawbacks of civil engagement with business. Rather than deciding on one side or the other, I have confirmed a paradox of corporate-oriented civil action.

Paradox emerged as a key theme in this research. Let us take, for example, the meaning of 'our common good' in the context of the banana trade. There are ever increasing circles of stakeholders in the banana trade - workers, communities, consumers, future generations - and even more stakeholders in the wider world that events and ideas in the banana sector relate to in some way. What, therefore, is the meaning of "our" or "common" in our common good? Let us consider this

[200] Note here that the business case for working on these issues was corporate respectability, not corporate responsibility. In other words, the perception of acceptable corporate practice by stakeholder groups was important. Therefore, I had a wry smile on my face every time I heard professionals in corporate social responsibility talk of Chiquita's 2000 social report as one of the best in the world, with them assuming therefore that Chiquita was one of the best socially responsible companies (or not even making this distinction). The issue,

in relation to our environment. Intensive banana production posed a number of environmental problems, such as deforestation, soil erosion, water pollution and various health and safety hazards for workers (Chapter 6). Reducing pesticide use, as described in the last chapter, was enabling of our common good by reducing health hazards to plantation workers and their families, and probably reducing the concentration of chemicals in the rivers, which might then lessen the impact on aquatic life. However, pollution issues remained, and production without chemicals was possible, though not as intensively. Although pesticide-management initiatives might be beneficial, if this then legitimated pesticide use and undermined the pressure and market demand for organic production, could it really be said to have enabled our common good? It helped the immediate stakeholders to a certain degree, but perhaps not a wider group of stakeholders.

We could go one step further and consider how even organic bananas would still need to be transported around the world, with the production of carbon dioxide gases in the process. The protection and development of local farming for local consumption was known to be important to reduce climate change and improve food security in the South. If the initiatives described in the previous chapters distracted us from these wider goals could we say they enabled our common good? The issue is whether B acts as a step or a barrier between A and C. And, of course, it can act as either, neither or both, depending on how people want to use it. Hence the issue is whether we are aware that B is a step in the right direction and not a final destination. The paradox is that successful civil action can move us one step forward but establish vested interests that then create a barrier to further change.

Corporate power was key to the paradox being faced. The large corporations were susceptible to campaigning because of their global brands, and as such they were key agents in the process of civil regulation. Companies without such a profile in the West would not be susceptible to brand-bashing campaigns, and so the business case for taking action on improving social and environmental conditions would not exist. Therefore, Deborah Spar (1998, p. 12) argued that:

> *The old Leninist link between multinational firms and foreign exploitation seems outmoded or even contradictory. Rather than having an interest in subverting human rights, corporations – particularly high-profile firms from open and democratic societies – may well see the commercial benefits of promoting human rights.*

However, this argument ignored how the consolidation of market-access by TGCs had allowed them to pit the different banana-producing countries against each other, to undermine production-stabilising initiatives, and drive down taxes, prices, pay and conditions. This downward pressure helped undermine the tax base of countries so they were not able to invest in social infrastructure in the way they might have, if not competing with each-other. What would the situation have been like if the previous 100 years had been characterised by better prices, pay and conditions? How might society have developed? And what would the situation have been like if the countries had

---

therefore, was whether civil regulatory processes would be driven by the opinions of professionals working on corporate responsibility, or whether they would respond to the needs of more immediate stakeholders.

had resources to spend on monitoring and enforcing corporate compliance with social and environmental legislation? Their situation would almost certainly have been a lot better if the TGCs had been broken up years ago, and if the banana producing governments had cooperated on production issues. Did the multistakeholder initiatives described in this thesis distract us from such issues? Yes. They were therefore, at the same time, both civil successes and civil failures.

Managing the paradox of civil action is crucial, and as I write this thesis as a civil action, I will explore the implications before drawing to a close.

Managing the Paradox: Recognising Self, Restructuring Society

The processes described in this thesis were not unusual. In 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg signalled the arrival of multistakeholder initiatives on the global stage. Nicanor Perlas (2002) described this as an "engagement juggernaut" that posed a major challenge to civil society. Depending on how people responded, this could either "split and neutralize civil society", or "mark the beginning of a new era of civilization" (ibid). There are two important implications from my analysis: how civil society must avoid co-optation and implosion by recognising its true self, including its common values, and by supporting the restructuring of society to support those values. I discuss each in turn.

First, civil society must awaken to itself. What are we for? Why? This is why in Chapter 2 I set out a value-based notion of civil society as the realm of participation for our common good, where that 'common good' is not a state but a process - the collective pursuit of individual preferences (or 'a world where many worlds fit', to borrow a phrase from the Zapatistas). I argued that different spiritual, ecocentric and secular traditions suggest that to interfere with people's expression is wrong, with this forming a philosophical basis for self-determination and democracy. That this approach allowed me to explore power relations as I did, revealing paradox and co-optation, demonstrates the validity of this approach. Defining civil society in terms of what it is not (state and business) is now redundant: "simply saying 'NGOs' has become inadequate because we are grouping many different political projects, some related to existing power and others in opposition to it" (Sassen 2001). Instead, global civil society must be "clear about its 'identity' – its nature, its source of power, its task, and so on. Absent this broader understanding of the origins, legitimacy, and sources of power of civil society, the possible ways of neutralizing co-optation will be weak and eventually ineffective." (Perlas 2002).

Will civil society understand its own identity and consciously awaken to its task?
Nicanor Perlas

A recognition of common values, despite different tactics, might mean that those collaborate with the private sector, and those who do not, can recognise an appropriate role for the other. The onus, however, must be on those who engage with

the private sector to reflect on the paradoxes inherent in their 'successes', as these can serve to marginalise other civil actors. Indeed the paradox we must all face as civil actors is that our success threatens success. This arises because we exist within complex webs of civil actions. If we do not realise our place in that web then we risk exerting a non-civil as well as a civil power. The implication is that we should recognise how paradox is inherent in all actions and therefore not defend our action as the 'right thing' in a reality where there could only be one 'right thing'. Instead, we must explore the paradoxes in our actions and seek greater consciousness of our own subjectivity by listening for other opinions and critiques of what we do and what we believe. To be critically self-aware and inquisitively other-aware.

What this requires is for civil actors to awaken to our human condition. By which I mean discovering and maintaining an awareness of one's identity as part of the system of life, and moving beyond ego-centred concerns and actions.[201] This is one meaning of my title-phrase "the civilisation of globalisation." When regarding 'civilisation' as a state of being, this phrase describes the community of those with a form of global consciousness. I do not mean people who are rich and privileged enough to witness the size, noises and colours of our globe, but a consciousness of being one with the planet and all its peoples. It is this awareness that can inspire the type of civil action I have discussed in this work, and I consider this further in Annex I.

'Civilisation' can also be understood as process. But when I say that "the civilisation of globalisation" is "in our power", I don't just mean that the civilising of economic globalisation is within our ability. I mean that the answers lie *inside* our power, in how we understand, reflect upon and exercise our own power with each-other. My thesis suggests that the social and environmental problems of this world stem from the fact that on the one hand, we often do not realise our own power, and therefore do not use it, and on the other hand, when we do exercise our power, we too often hold it tightly rather than using it for the liberation of all. As macro- and micro-level problems are interrelated, so the mundane explains the profane and the profound.

There are practical implications from this analysis. It suggests that John Clark (2000) was right to identify the accountability of civil groups as their 'Achilles heel,' and that we required a framework of norms, standards and accountability that would shape participation, as well high levels of co-ordination between civil groups; and the honest negotiation of roles and responsibilities between civil groups in the North and the South. Implicit in these recommendations was the idea that Jean

---

[201] Sharing experiences with other activists makes me think that if people become aware of their place in the world then their own preferences may become to serve our common good. Perhaps then, the most important work in the banana trade, as in any area of life, would be to help create this sense of common purpose? Perhaps the question is how people were inspiring others to live for our common good? Events such as the 'Smile of Nature' conference, which brought together women banana workers from around the world, helped to create a sense of solidarity and common purpose. But how were people attempting to do this with people in traditional positions of power in the banana trade? Unfortunately there were few activities that attempted to reach business people on a personal level. This is why I attempted to do this in my work, for example, by bringing to the UK two women workers from Nicaragua.

Cohen and Andrew Arato's (1992) expressed - that for social movements to be really transformative they had to be 'self-limiting' in order to preserve their vigour and momentum. Self-limitation meant that they should censor their actions so that their power would not be transformed to another form of colonisation within society. To avoid this fate, social movements had to engage in "the establishment of democratic [mechanisms]... within the firm and the state" as well as democratizing themselves (Cohen and Arato 1992, p. 137). I previously called this the triple democratisation of institutions in the public, private and civil spheres of life (Bendell 1998a).

Unfortunately at the time of writing null-definitions of civil society abounded so that calls for 'civil society participation' in governmental and corporate policy making processes could come with an intent, or produce an effect, of deepening power imbalances rather than correcting them. Vague concepts like "stakeholder participation" became popular, instead of *stakeholder democracy*. We still had to move beyond the rhetoric of participation and rediscover the meaning of democracy (Mohan 2001).

We also still had to develop a greater focus on structure and how this related to the values of civil society. My research supports Nicanor Perlas's (2002) suggestion that "the lack of understanding of the structural constraints of large institutions like governments and transnational corporations" was a "key vulnerability" of many civil actors, which led to their co-optation. Some feminists had seen this happen in their own movement, and emphasised that constructive engagement with powerful institutions needed "to become an opportunity to restructure from within (changing policy, structure and political culture) as opposed to adapting to the dominant ideology" (Taylor 2000, p. 117).

For corporate engagement, this meant the agenda had to evolve toward restructuring capitalism. Box 2 illustrates the particularity of the civil regulatory processes described in this work. It could do little for unbranded social and environmental problems, or where the basic necessities of civil society, such as freedom of information and protection from violence, were absent. This was not the only problem. "When there are so many companies, how sustainable are these sorts of pressures, really?" asked one activist involved in the campaigns described in this thesis (Coates 1999, pers com). He sought to redirect his organisation's work towards more structural issues, including the role of government and intergovernmental agencies.

Hope is a risk that must be run.
Georges Bernanos

Therefore in my own work I encouraged people to consider whether companies could be engaged to help change the rules and regulations in a global economy in ways that might support our common good and that this should be what we mean by corporate citizenship (Bendell 2000c, p.

250). I suggested there was a business case restructuring capitalism (Bendell 2002).[202] In a world where government was captured by corporate interests and discourse, the first step was to change the perception of business as apolitical and merely commercial, and to awaken some businesspeople to the idea they could express their societal concerns at work. The second step was to try and change the criteria for corporate responsibility so that it referred to a company's support for democratic governance, at local, national and international levels. To turn corporate power against itself for the sake of the planet and its people - perhaps this was the ultimate paradox. It was, however the application of a 'restructuralist' approach to society and social change, as I outlined in Chapter 5.

Un-fencing Futures

This thesis has been a difficult exercise. My aim was not merely to make a coherent argument based on my research and perform for academic protocols: I wanted to generate concepts that could be mental tools of liberation. In combining these aims this work would be my own protest against the slumber of academia, a rattling of the fences between disciplines, between academic thought and the 'real world'.

Not only did I reject traditional academic forms of writing, but I also sought to avoid performing the semiotics of validity apparent in the action-research literature. Perhaps I was fighting too many battles at once, and the result is a somewhat awkward text. I felt oppressed by the system, and the result is a strong and sometimes angry personal voice. In future I should turn up the volume of the voices of those I am concerned about.

Nevertheless the methodological approach appears robust. First, the theoretical approach was supported by my empirical work, where the case of social auditing shows the power of certain methodologies and how their often unacknowledged value-systems deter change, and perpetuate existing power relations. Second, I revealed paradoxes by expanding my field of view. This indicates how the reductionism of mainstream social science, which I outlined in Chapter 4, sheltered us from a realisation that paradox is an inherent characteristic of complex interconnected systems such as human society, and the implications therefrom for social change. It took me some time to embrace the idea of a multi-sided, complex and contradictory reality, and most commentators did not mobilise the concept (the doctoral thesis of David Murphy (1998) on the

[202] Other commentators began talking about this in terms of the third generation of corporate citizenship (Zadek 2001). The influence of civil action on the international legal framework for the banana trade was something I did not investigate in this thesis. It would have been interesting, for example, to examine the influence of different civil actors on the processes that led to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreeing an exemption for the European Union's (EU) Cotenou Agreement which gave preferential market access to former colonies.

paradox of partnership being a notable exception).[203] I discuss the wider implications of this in Annex I. Future research on these topics (mine and others) could explore paradox more fully.

This work has also demonstrated the importance of maintaining a multi-perspectival view of power. The power matrix supported consideration of aspects of power that had been largely ignored: how actors who traditionally do not have power over others can exert such power; how those who need 'empowering' can be those thought of as 'in power', in the sense that they might need help to break free from customary practices. In addition I have shown the usefulness of retaining the notion of 'power over' when considering discourse, and therefore the relevance of a restructuralist approach. The research also shows the usefulness of separating the issue of intent and effect from our understanding of the dimensions of power, something that had not been done extensively before (Chapter 5). In future, research into civil power could look more closely at the types of civil action that might restructure causal factors in society. In doing this, researchers might benefit from the experience of diverse strands of feminist thought and action: I discovered this rather late.

A key implication of this work for the future research agenda on civil society is the importance of exploring the values of different actors (and organisational cultures). Exploring values would mean asking *why*. Academics, like the fictional one in dialogue with a child at the beginning of this thesis, had forgotten the meaning of "why". In the study of civil society, researchers focused on *how*. How organisations are formed, how people come together, how many meetings they have, how effective they are. It was not just positivists who focused on 'how' but action researchers were also threatened with a retreat into how. How to do action research, how to sound like an action researcher - not why. Theorists on power asked how does A do that to B, even if A was considered a system or discourse. The essential *why* was ignored. The same was true with the multistakeholder initiatives I analysed. The how-to-do-it meant the why-we-do-it was in danger of getting lost. I've learnt that if you really want to know why, don't ask how. Ask why. Again and again. And we must ask this using both forms of why – the downstream "to do what?" and the upstream "because of what?" In both directions we find motivations and values become key.[204]

In their book *Careers Un-Ltd*, Carmel McConnell and Jonathan Robison (2002) reported that more and more people were asking themselves and each-other 'why does work have to be like this?' As we moved further into the century, did this indicate we were seeing the emergence of a 'Generation Why' that might define a new professionalism, founded on doing what matters, and really being ourselves when at work and home? This might have only been a phenomenon of certain age-

[203] This may have been a result of Western modes of thought, as the Eastern Jain philosophy includes the concept of 'Anekant' - that there is a multi-sided reality - which is then linked to the practice of empathy with another's perceptions and views, as a form of non-violent thought.

[204] This is difficult to do. For example, at various stages in this thesis I slipped from "why do this" into "how to do this" piece of work - the expectations of academia being around me.

groups in the West, but if they managed the paradoxes of their careers, seeking to recognise self and restructure society, would we see a global change?

For some people, there seemed to be a common story to multistakeholder initiatives for sustainable development. This was a story of social and ecological modernisation, where we could address social and environmental issues within the western modernisation project of industrial economies and nation states. Then there was another story being told through criticism of these initiatives. This was a story of our struggle against the co-optation and undermining of our social and environmental movements by those in power. Yet perhaps there could be a third story to tell. A story of trying to meet the challenges of our time in whatever ways were open to us, while recognising the limits of our actions and therefore celebrating a diversity of self-aware civil action. A story of (r)evolution of both system and self. A story with one beginning and many endings, being told through a movement of one 'No' and many 'Yeses'. The creation of a world where many world's fit, through the civilisation of globalisation.

Box 2: Careful Not to Generalise

As discussed in Chapter 4, there was a tendency to generalise from specific research projects and I have used the past tense to emphasise the particular temporal and spatial context of my work.

The banana trade between Costa Rica and the UK was a trade with a specific set of circumstances that meant civil action could influence the companies involved. I mentioned in Chapter 6 that I chose to investigate the banana trade because there was already a certain amount of civil group activity aimed at changing the trade. Why was this? Were bananas particularly important? Other agricultural commodities - cereals, sugar, coffee and cocoa beans - occupied a larger share of world trade than bananas. Trade in each of these commodities was highly concentrated, with 3 to 6 TGCs marketing from 60% (sugar) to 90% (coffee) of global exports. Yet none of these commodities were as closely identified with corporations' brand names as bananas were with the three TGCs that produced, sourced and marketed 65-70% of them: Chiquita, Dole, Del Monte. It was the brand-bashing potential of bananas that attracted activists. As Alistair Smith of BananaLink said, bananas seemed "more fun" (Chapter 3). Therefore we must keep in mind Naomi Klein's (2000) concern that the adoption of codes of conduct might not address 'unbranded exploitation', and not over-generalise from the evidence in this particular study. Gill Seyfang (1999, p. 1) found that "emotive issues such as child labour are afforded high profile attention in codes of conduct -as a result of media attention in consumer markets rather than workers concerns... This raises the question of whether codes of conduct are an effective tool for improving workers' labour standards, or a marketing gimmick targeted at consumers."

Another reason why we should not generalise is because of the unique situation of Costa Rica. Why did I research there? The main reason was because I had made contacts at an international conference hosted there. Such conferences were not unusual and reflected the international connections of university staff in the country. Father Gerardo Vargas, of Foro Emaus, explained to the media that Costa Rica featured prominently in consumer-awareness campaigns abroad, "because it is the only one that has a network of grassroots organizations sending out information about what goes on behind the scenes in local plantations" (Escofet, 1999). Jorge Sauma of the banana ministry CORBANA concurred that Costa Rica's "democratic culture, and the large amount of data available here, make it easier for [civil groups] to come here to dig up incriminating evidence against the industry, than in other more hermetic countries" (ibid).

Civil regulation seemed more likely to be successful where there was a healthy domestic civil society. The question then is whether the civil regulatory processes were addressing the most pressing threats to our common good. In the case of the banana trade, reports suggested that Costa Rica was far from the worst place for banana production problems. For example, Bob Perillo wrote in the IUF Bulletin that "less than 1 percent of Ecuador's banana workers belong to unions. Wages for Ecuadorian banana workers are considerably lower than those of unionized banana workers elsewhere, and the numerous social benefits that banana unions have won for their members through long struggles – including health care, housing, electricity, potable water, education for their children – are almost entirely absent in Ecuador's banana sector" (IUF, 2001).

The Tico Times (Escofet, 1999) reported that Costa Rican plantation employees earned three times as much as their Ecuadorean counterparts. My research in Nicaragua showed the situation was much worse in that neighbouring country in 2001. As civil regulation was partly dependent on (the threat of) brand-bashing activities, which in turn were aided by strong domestic civil societies in the south, its ability to generate improvements in all forms of trade was more limited than the ILO report, mentioned earlier, suggested.

ANNEX I: Your Conclusions

March 19, 2002, Brighton Marina, UK

Dear Reader,

I'm sitting here with lots of notes and thinking about how to order this final comment my doctoral research. The wind is picking up and I'm being jolted around on this boat that I'm hiding on while I finish writing. I'm trying to steady my thoughts, but there is so much I could say, and everything seems to relate to everything else. There are ebbs, flows, and eddies everywhere. It is an impossible task. But then again, do you think this could illustrate a key finding? As we try to order and conceptualise the world, we categorise it and reduce it in ways we think help us to understand it. But does this process really help us to understand? I'm reading a little book at the moment, which probably says more about my own conclusions than anything else. In *Buddhism Plain and Simple,* Steve Hagen (1999, p. 111) writes that "what we overlook is that underneath the ground of our beliefs, opinions, and concepts is a boundless sea of uncertainty. The concepts we cling to are like tiny boats tossed about in the middle of a vast ocean. We stand on our beliefs and ideas thinking that they're solid, but in fact they (and we) are on shifting seas. Any ideas or beliefs we hold in our minds are necessarily set against other ideas and beliefs. Thus we cannot help but experience doubt." Over the past few years I did not want to float on anyone else's boats. I explored mainstream academic thought on concepts like 'power' and 'civil society' and then deconstructed them, creating new mental frames for understanding the world that we inhabit. And then what? Well you'll have noticed already that these new concepts also began to leak. I was seeking simple ways of describing the world that might be liberating of people's potential, yet the cracks began to appear. And so I experienced first hand that all conceptualisation is fallible. If we avoid this realisation it can cause us great stress and makes it really tough for us when writing up a rigorous piece of academic work. As Rupesh Shah, who read a first draft of my work, said "a thesis is still imbued with the idea that you'll have the right answer at the end of it. No matter how much you tell yourself it's not like that the whole academic process is saying it is." Are you expecting me to attempt a final word on my research question in this chapter? I think that this is like trying to have the final word in a never ending conversation, or solve an equation with infinity as one of its variables. It is interesting to note that mathematicians have recently worked out an Omega number that denotes the number of problems that are uncomputable. It just so happens that that number is also uncomputable. It seems our clockwork universe is refusing to keep time, and whatever intellectual disciplines we are in, we are all finding an irrepressible reality. So in these conclusions, I won't try to shelter from this world by smoothing out my concepts - instead I'll let my mind bob along on that shifting sea of reality.

To reflect this turbulence I have switched into the present tense for this chapter. Until now I wrote the thesis in the past tense as this allowed me to describe our present as a past madness, which I found extremely liberating. It also meant I could be very deliberate about the conclusions I was making for a specific time and place, and those I was making for the future. Much academic work gets quoted as 'truth' when actually its findings can be very contextual and transient. By writing in the past tense my findings could be about how things were, rather than how they are, and so restrict this generalisation. I also had another thing in mind. I wanted to write to people in the future, to say that some of us did know and did try. Using the past tense in this way may have created the sense of an omnipotent view of reality. "You do a good job of saying 'this is the story'" Rupesh said, "but then again the impression is that the point you've got to is the point you've always got to. But you weren't like this. You never did quite get to grips with it and with what everything was about." I realised that there could be a meta-communication in this thesis that things are decided, for me at least. This is contrary to my main findings, which were that I should have been doing things differently, and that my knowledge, like yours, will only ever be partial. The present tense allows me to bear witness to the messiness of my current (and future) conceptualisation.

There is another good reason for doing this. One argument I make is that as action-researchers we shouldn't suspend our activism when we start writing. Therefore we need to think about how people will respond to what we write. If we are interested in empowering people to express themselves in harmony with others' self-expression, which is what I mean by 'our common good', then we need to think about how they might learn to do this. Most concluding chapters try to close down and close out issues. But this doesn't help people learn. As Rupesh said, "people don't find the answers by being told the answers... they find the answers by asking themselves questions... and trying stuff..." Dialogue is important for learning, as I discovered when I began to talk with others about this work. Only then did I realise what it 'meant' in the sense of what the key messages were for different readers. Normally the way a thesis is written assumes a passive reader who imbibes knowledge. But, given that I am interested in social change, the fact you know what I think is not as important as what you can take from this for your own life and civil action.

Therefore in this final chapter I am opening up issues, and addressing you the reader, using the simple device of writing you a letter! I will also open things up by retelling to you some of the conversations I had with people about my thesis. Because of academic norms I did not give as much voice in the thesis to the correspondence and conversations with friends that was a significant aspect of my own learning. For example, when a friend made a point that related to my inquiry, I explored the literature they cited and then referred to that. But this perpetuates a false impression of where knowledge is. I trust the insights of these friends, who are not all published 'experts' but naturally inquiring people. Perhaps those who think research is their 'job' too easily

exclude their lived experiences when doing 'research work'. Is that what you find? If insight is all around us, how can we integrate that and reflect it in our academic work?

When I talked to Rupesh about this idea he pointed me to some literature on the question of how we can generate validity for our work if we reject scientific modes of thought, which I mentioned in Chapter 4 (Lather 1993). One way would be to invite further interpretation by presenting multiple voices defining the situation differently. Another suggestion is that we use an embodied, emotional, and reflective voice. We could try to practice what we preach when we write, which in my case would mean giving some thought as to how I could inspire people to work for our common good. What all this suggests is an opening up rather than a closing-off of inquiry. Such an approach resonates with a belief that life is itself an inquiry, and our common good is served by supporting people in their own journeys of inquiry, rather than imposing 'knowledge' upon them. Moreover, it recognises how people learn. It is interesting though that I had already decided to take this approach without having read this post-modern literature on validity - as a civil action-researcher I felt my validity came from my intent. This reassures me of the main methodological argument I made, which is that to focus on rules for the method of research can distract us from the motive of research. Once awakened to the right intent there are no rules, merely natural expressions of what we are.

Do you think talking about a 'right intent' sounds a bit arrogant? It can suggest a self-righteousness I-know-what's-best perspective, can't it? I discussed my work with a PhD student at Bath University, who was doing collaborative research where she sought to research with people rather than research about them. She felt action-research should always be collaborative, otherwise it creates an alienated relationship between the researcher and researched. When I explained my approach, as someone 'going in' with an explicit agenda as a civil activist, trying to change what was happening, she wondered what this said about myself and my values. "Isn't that just steam-rolling people with your own agenda? Where do you get the right to do that?" These are important questions. I was reminded of something the activist Anne Claire Chambron (2000, pers com) said at a women banana-worker conference in Germany. "People like you have power" she said. "There's a role for intermediaries but you need to be involved with the people who count. We have a problem with people who have influence as university people or consultants but don't have the involvement. Its good you're here." I believe in people's freedom of self-expression and my thesis is about the collective pursuit of individual self-expression - our common good. I would have had no justification for using my privileged position of power if it was not to challenge those hierarchical power structures that inhibit the expression of life. Therefore I would have had no justification for using my privileged position of power if it was not to challenge that position of power. Sounds quite hard-core, doesn't it? But that is what I mean about 'right intent'. The issue is not so much whether we collaborate with a certain group of people, but whether we are trying to liberate the collective pursuit of individual self-expression.

The problem is that we live in hierarchical social systems that often restrict people's self-expression rather than enabling it. I, like many before me, have shown in my thesis how capitalist organisations are doing this, in Costa Rica, the United Kingdom and elsewhere. Moreover I have shown how civil groups sometimes do this, either by believing themselves to be right (and righter than others) or by their concern for their own organisation's status and stability. Moreover I have seen how the same hierarchical views and practices are creeping into alternative political movements. Whether on the streets or in the boardrooms our well-intentioned social actions risk reenacting the alienated forms of relating to each other and the planet that have created our strife in the first place. This is why I said in the concluding chapter that the answers to the civilization of globalisation lie *inside* our power, in how we understand, reflect upon and exercise our own power. We need to use it for the liberation of all.

It is not only through their relations with business that activists risk reinforcing the problems of society. The anti-capitalism movement has gained notoriety and therefore society has sought spokespeople, while established power-centres have sought 'leaders' that they can engage with. For example, a Cambridge University academic was awarded a 'Global Leader of Tomorrow' award at the 2001 World Economic Forum, after marketing herself as an anti-capitalist activist. We need 'Global Servants of Tomorrow', not self-appointed leaders from privileged social positions and with egos to attend to. The academic said she was there 'to give voice to the voiceless'. Clearly, no one is voiceless, but billions are not heard by those in positions of power over others, who prefer to listen to someone who fits their world-view. We must be careful that when speaking on behalf of others do we do not re-inforce their marginalisation. We must be reflective about our positions of power. Does this make any sense to you? Do you find this resonates with your own experience of organisations? The reason I'm being so belligerent about these findings is because they are backed up by my lived experience working with, within and against a whole range of organisations. The problem is I can't go into all of that in the limited space I have left. But my experience makes me confident you'll know what I mean. Funny that, really, isn't it? Why bother labouring a point with more and more evidence when you know if the person reading just inquires into their own experience they will find the same issues? (That is quite a break from traditional academic modes of writing).

So then, the burning question, which I will return to again and again: how might we learn to grasp and practice our power in ways that liberate our common good? Perhaps it will only be when we become more fully conscious of our single planetary tribe. This is the other way of understanding 'the civilisation of globalisation': the civilisation that is the community of those with a form of global consciousness hold the answer. And by this I do not mean people like us who are rich and privileged enough to witness the size, noises and colours of our globe. Many non-Western cultures approach this globalised consciousness in their own ways, and we have much to learn from them. This is why the whole 'development' project is so fatally flawed. It is based on the idea of the

globalisation of (western) civilisation, of improving the 'developing' toward the 'developed.' Only when the West realises that people in the global South aren't just a source of cheap labour, because of hierarchical trading structures, or hapless recipients of our guilty charity, but that some are a well of wisdom for living in harmony with the self-expression of all life on Earth, will we stop oppressing them - and ourselves. What do you think about when you give money to charity?

Can you stop reading for a moment and reflect on what you think are the key things that need to start happening to help civilise globalisation? (Stop reading!) OK, what did you think about? I have found that many people working on globalisation issues, whether anti-, pro- or reformist seem to view their challenge as a technical one: a question of how to organise and manage the required change. This ignores the scale and the nature of the problem. A sustainable peaceful planet requires a new common purpose. We need a revolution of consciousness. Otherwise we re-create the problems we seek to challenge, only in different ways. As some charities and non-profit groups 'professionalise' their fund-raising by marketing bite-sized guilt trip fixes, or pay people to hassle us on the streets, they perpetuate the alienation of people and purpose, and suppress the birth of a wider movement for social change. We need that people are helped to awaken to what is wrong and their role in that, not just manipulated by ads to give to this or that. If we begin to think this way, as Rupesh notes, "governance for sustainability can be reconstructed away from interpretations that treat it as a global management project predicated upon the provision of technical solutions by the elite and instead towards the development of a participatory and reflexive play of learning by all individuals."

There is another reason for this focus on personal motives. My research demonstrates the unintended consequences of actions that people may take with good intentions. There is the example of environmental activists thinking they were helping more by becoming involved in social and labour issues, but in effect, marginalising those with more of an understanding and a mandate to work on behalf of workers. Or the example of social activists thinking they were succeeding by becoming more professional when that 'professionalism' was actually inhibiting themselves, and others, from taking more liberating action. Civil actions don't necessarily create civil outcomes, especially when you look at the wider context of what is happening. So we cannot scientifically determine what is the best course of action. Therefore having the right intent is crucial, isn't it? I suggest that intent should be to enable the collective pursuit of individual self-expression. This intent creates an intensely reflective sense of one's power and leads us to question the effects of our actions on ever increasing circles of interaction. This allows us to be more aware of where unintended consequences occur.

And occur they will! There is a certainty of unintended consequences to civil actions and ideas, for three key reasons. First, because there will always be resistance to civil actions and ideas, an action or idea that meets less resistance than another will therefore gain more power. Second, because

any changes started or concepts promoted by civil action can be used by others without civil intent to undermine our common good. And third, because there is infinite context to any civil action or idea, so our knowledge of our common good will only ever be partial while there is infinite capacity for the first two processes to occur. I will discuss each in turn.

First, my research has suggested that discourses and practices created through relations between business and civil groups, civil and non-civil actors, civil and non-civil intents, will always be both partially enabling and partially inhibiting of our common good, because in order to gain power they must not challenge too much of the power of the non-civil organisational form, or the non-civil actor. My work demonstrated that there was resistance coming from people performing non-civil 'roles' created for them by organisations in each of the private, civil and state sectors. My experience tells me that there might always be this resistance as it is not merely the roles we are given by hierarchical organisations that create this resistance, but our own selves. Neither I, nor anyone I have met, seem to be completely free of uncivil aspects to our characters, by which I mean an interest in our self in isolation from the whole.

What this finding on resistance to civil power suggests is that the ideas that become popular as "ethical" over the coming years will be those that do not challenge existing power systems. Worse, these ideas could be used to undermine the expression of ideas and practices that are more liberating of our common good. I have discussed this in relation to social auditing and ethical trade. I also mentioned briefly how I was unknowingly complicit in this process. For example, I worked hard over the years to investigate and promote the business case for taking action on social and environmental issues, but didn't expect this to then make governments think they no longer had to worry. The ILO now reports that "overwhelming evidence exists on the efficacy of consumer pressure to induce conditions of production in the targeted activity" and doesn't propose any government intervention (ILO 2000, p. 50). Worse still, ideas developed out of civil intent can be used for regressive ends. For example, I invested my energies in promoting the idea of working in partnership as a way of getting more civil groups involved in corporate responsibility initiatives. Yet this discourse of inter-sectoral partnership is now being promoted as a reason for further privatisation and deregulation.

This illustrates that concepts cannot be understood in isolation, only in relation. I have shown how sustainability could be a negative concept in some circumstances, whether or not those using the concept had civil intent or not. Karl Popper (1945) said a similar thing about freedom some time ago: "complete freedom would bring about the end of freedom, and therefore proponents of complete freedom are in actuality, whatever their intentions, enemies of freedom." Therefore a concept is nothing without its context. I will go as far as to say that there is no such thing as a positive or good concept, as any concepts can have positive or negative implications depending on

the context and the intent of those using them. There is no such thing as a good or bad idea, just good or bad relations of ideas.

The importance of context brings us to a third reason why there is a certainty of unintended consequences. As reality is infinite, so there are infinite numbers of connections and relations and thus context is infinite. Consequently there is infinite capacity for unintended consequences to occur in the human and more-than-human worlds; we can never say they will never occur. We might even say that infinity suggests they will certainly occur.

The certainty of unintended consequences suggests to us that the wider we cast the net of context when considering an action or idea, the more we will discover contradiction and paradox. This is how I described the power of civil action and reaction on the banana trade. As I suggested at the end of the last chapter, there is paradox in the process of civil regulation more generally. Civil regulation relies on the existence of organisational forms, and power relations associated with them, that have created the context for social and environmental problems in the first place. Civil regulation moderates some of the excesses of corporate rule, and might therefore legitimate it for some and so help perpetuate it. How can it be considered for our common good for civil groups and actors to help businesses consolidate their positions of power? This is what they are doing if we accept that there is a business case for working on issues related to our common good. And can we say that businesses are ever working for our common good when they have a dividend-motive, which essentially means the extraction of power from people involved in an economic process? And if we ever resolve these paradoxes theoretically, would it matter, as we don't know the longer-term outcome of civil regulation? For example, on the one hand, it might impose added costs for branded business, which may open up more space for alternative forms of economic activity. On the other hand, it might create barriers to entry, protecting the position of branded businesses from new competition, and perhaps leading to further brand consolidation. We just don't know.

Trying to resolve these paradoxes create angst for many civil activists. A Living Earth (UK) representative, who had been working with Shell in Nigeria told Rupesh that "it's difficult, because you are constantly thinking, is all that we are doing providing potential greenwash for them or is there any real change going on; are they prepared to listen and are they really trying to change. I don't know – on my good days I think maybe they are, and then on my bad days I think well this is just a nonsense" (quoted in Shah 2000, p. 15). An answer is that both aspects of this duality are occurring at the same time. I realise that I had the same stories of 'real change' versus 'greenwash' in my own head, and different situations would remind of the different aspects of what I was doing. In this way, I also had 'good days' and 'bad days'. If you feel comfortable with your situation and are not being reminded of the contradictions of your civil actions then you have a 'good day'. But this thesis is the result of me having a lot of 'bad days.' This is because I cut myself off from any positive feedback that I was doing the 'right thing' and lived a very isolated life for a year,

including a very formative time in a shack on a beach in Nicaragua. If I had been having a good time in the UK this thesis would have been different. My isolation meant I had a lot of dark times along the way and fell quite ill in the process. The result is that the good and bad days have merged and the dark times are no more. I have accepted infinite context, contradiction and paradox. Before, I tried to 'under-stand' -- to appreciate what is under, what is supporting, the basis of something. Now I see we can 'over-stand' -- to appreciate what is over, what is surrounding, the context of everything.

The fact that there are potential positive and negative dimensions to civil regulation means the way these dimensions are perceived by those involved in its processes are key. Such perceptions are themselves a consequence of civil regulation and in turn will have wider consequences. I have shown how, by working with business, some civil activist's perceptions were being shaped in ways that might undermine their pursuit of our common good. These findings echo what I felt from my earlier work at the WorldWide Fund for Nature (WWF). I expressed my concerns with the way their work has developed, or not developed, in Chapter 3. Just before I started writing this thesis I had a conversation with Jason Keeble, who worked for one of the companies who is a member of their sustainable timber buying groups. Without me saying anything about it he said "it hasn't achieved much, it lost the energy." Meanwhile WWF staff still keep saying what a success it is, and have become adept at forgetting the old targets and policies and coming up with new ones that allow them to... to do what? Get on with their nicely co-opted lives?

An intense love for solitude,
distaste for involvement in worldly affairs,
persistence in knowing the Self and
awareness of the goal of knowing --
all this is called true knowledge.

The Bhagavad Gita

Worried about what his friends were really achieving by working on 'corporate social responsibility' (CSR), Zaid Hassan (2002, pers com) wrote to me that he felt "radical notions and critiques often prove too discomforting for many people. I worry that our systems have become so good at co-opting people that we will lose our very best and brightest to the business of propping up a bankrupt system. I fear that our genius will be employed in engineering better and better stories around why things cannot change in any radical sense." Like Zaid, I now regard CSR as crisis management, picking up the pieces of a global governance disaster. Yet many of our friends see it as a panacea. And some do not accept there is a problem in working for a company that needs to create a business model of selling services at $1000 a day for their work on social-environmental issues and the effective resolution of those issues.

Antonio Gramsci was concerned about the power of capital over civil society, in terms of how it would help shape a cultural hegemony. However, he still believed that people like you and me could intervene on the ideological level and join a struggle for public opinion (Mouffe 1979). So

after reading this what do you think? Reports I published that contained some of the same information and analysis as Chapters 9 and 10 had some impact on some practitioners. The significance of this I can't know. But what was really revealing was the response of some people toward me after I made those criticisms, as I described in Chapters 8 and 9. Not only were members of those organisations very defensive, but a number of friends who work in the CSR field behaved in a more defensive manner and questioned my "professionalism" and my intent.

And that is what we must talk about. Intent. My key conclusion from this research is that I did everything wrong! I should have been looking at intents and values right from the start. But that's a worthwhile conclusion. I have found it important to study intent for three key reasons. First, because the certainty of unintended consequences makes it difficult to assess the merit of anything merely on its effects. Second, the importance of context makes it difficult to assess any concept without considering intents behind those using the concept in any given moment. And third, because the intent is the most important thing anyway. I say this as I am coming to believe that the way to achieve subjective happiness is to reach a state of mind where the service of others' self-expression is your greatest self-expression. In those words of Mother Teresa I read when I was 14 - "it's not what you do but how much love you put into doing it." John Lennon and Paul McCartney once sung how "with our love we could save the world." What I've shown is that this may not be the case, but with our love we could certainly make the world a place worth saving. So whereas I tried to understand civil society in terms of its effects, I now understand it can only be understood in terms of intent. Civil society is the sphere of people and groups trying, rather than succeeding, in supporting our common good.

But we cannot escape that easily. To truly try to serve our common good we must try to assess the outcomes of our actions. A gust of reality has capsized my new conceptual boat. Contradiction and paradox is everywhere. This is illustrated as we explore values and intents more closely.

At different times I have discussed the importance of the personal in releasing our power within. This was highlighted to me when we brought over two Nicaraguan women workers to the UK, as I mentioned in the last chapter. What I didn't mention was that by meeting the women, the representative from Chiquita decided to change policy and address the situation in Nicaragua. Neither did I say that after the meeting, at a drinks reception I put on for colleagues, Claudia and Lesbia met a friend of mine who was so worried about their situation that she arranged with us the finance to build Claudia a house and employ them to work for us for a year. Our civil action had created a revolution in their lives, if not within the social and economic system. Yet this does not mean that the power of the personal is always so progressive. I have discussed above, and in earlier chapters, how feelings of friendship, love and solidarity can have regressive effects when expressed within bounded communities, especially if those communities have a negative impact on others. A small example this is the way that dissent is seen as nasty within the epistemic

communities of practice in ethical trading, social auditing and CSR. A more extreme example smacked me between the eyes when I was watching Larry King Live on CNN a couple of months after September 11th 2001. He was talking about this woman who had just died of her burns, and then the rock star Jewel played a song in tribute of her. The feeling was of extreme compassion and solidarity. Then, immediately, in exactly the same tone, Larry King turned to an army general to ask very sensitively how the 'campaign' was going. Friendship, love and solidarity within one group, bounded by ignorance and fear, was leading to the destruction of another. And they felt loving about it all. This is the paradox of the power of the personal. But it is a paradox that we can overcome if we continually awaken each other to the self-evident truth that there is one global community. This is what I was talking about with *Planetism* - that a planetary consciousness will help the power of the personal to be progressive for all.

There is a large populace not in touch with these ideas - people who have been manipulated over the years to think this or that, buy this or that. Many cultures embody and perpetuate generations of manipulation. Because of the way people have been manipulated many have been held back from awakening to this consciousness. Like I am/was/will be. Thus we might believe in democracy but fear it. Trying to enable the collective pursuit of individual preferences might unleash destructive behaviours. Perhaps we are not ready for democracy? Perhaps then the emerging meritocratic coalition of paternalist-thinking public figures in business, civil and government organisations that I have described in this thesis is safest bet at the moment? Yet won't this just perpetuate the manipulation that has made real democracy so frightening? This won't do - we need a new technology of liberation.

This technology of liberation must focus both inward and outward: how to liberate ourselves and how to liberate others. There are also two parts to this liberation - on the one hand we need to grasp our power, on the other we need to see our common good in using that power for the service of all. For the first aspect, we may learn something from feminist researchers. Janet Townsend (1999, p. 24) and her colleagues "think that it is possible to enable other people to do something, but not to empower them, not to give them power. If you give someone power, you can take it away: it is only if they take that power for themselves that it is theirs." Enabling others to self-empower could take the form of undermining the power of others and of discourse over people's aspirations and opportunities, or by working with people to facilitate them in finding their power from within by seeing things differently. From this outward practice, we might learn better how we can empower ourselves. The other part to a technology of liberation must be how we sustain our awakening to our common interest, and how we might help others to do the same. On this very question Phyllida Cox asked me "how can people who are materially comfortable find ways to realise their stake in the 'common good' over and above seeking and being taught to seek this in desires of fetishised material consumption? But of course people have the capacity to aspire far beyond the limits of what their immediate environment might be, so what I guess I'm trying to

understand is the watershed point (or process), when an individual or a group knows that there has to be something more, something better and a consciousness of common interest arises." Similarly Rupesh said he was left wanting to hear more about the kind of techniques that would help people to engage in the challenges I am raising. He said "people are going to think, yeah, this is really important, but how on earth will I do this?"

It is difficult to say. It will require a new mode of 'teaching'. It will require us to stop revering the teacher. It will require us to stop reifying concepts and words. I remember when I was a kid I pointed out the moon to my cat, and she came and smelt my finger. I read that the Buddha said to his followers "don't believe me because others do. And don't believe anything because you read it in a book, either. Don't put your faith in reports, or tradition or hearsay... don't rely on mere logic, or inference, or appearances or speculation"(in Hagen 1999, p. 9). People must find out things for themselves. So we need to think about situations and stimuli that might help people see the moon for themselves. Then they might decide to reach for it. If they do they will define their own roles as civil actors. "What is the grassroots role?" asked Pioneers of Change co-ordinator Marianne Knuth (2000, pers com). "We don't know, and we need not know," she said. "The change will not be tidy or neat, but each of our efforts matter. We need to trust that, even though the scale of the challenge may seem insurmountable. And then of course it goes without saying, the more the merrier."

At the same time as focusing on this very person-centred micro-level work, to enable people to form their own grassroots roles, we must not lose sight of system-centred macro-level work, and relate the two. Stephanie Riger (1997) noted that we can create illusions of empowerment when much is controlled at the macro-level. I am already wondering whether there is evidence of this in the women's movement in Nicargua. They focus almost entirely on the power that comes from knowledge. They raise the awareness of women workers about their rights, and then the awareness of western companies so they might require that such rights are respected. Currently, they don't seem to consider the need for organising and bargaining as important in providing a different form of power. If all people became aware of the rights issues but the system of production and trade remained the same, would the women's new-found power be transient?

There might be some pointers toward this technology of liberation in my own life. Rupesh Shah said he was left with "an unfinished picture" of me, and that more information on how I came to think and act like I do, and how I (may have) escaped third-dimensional power would be helpful. "The thesis has a lot about reflection offline... but what happens online?" he asked. This is why first person inquiry now seems so important, although it was not something I focused on. I can't explore this in detail here, but some things in my life are worth mentioning. First, was the fact that I grew up in a number of different countries, and experienced different education systems. In the US, my mother ended up teaching me from home as the syllabus was so different to the UK. This

meant that from an early age I saw the 'knowledge' taught at school as something that was decided by someone somewhere that I must learn. As different people in different places obviously were making different decisions, there was no 'set of knowledge' to assimilate. This must have had a major affect on the way I now view the 'received wisdom' of different cultures and academic disciplines as contextual and relative. This is reflected in the way I have deconstructed ideas and concepts in my work. Second, I suffered severely as a child with eczema and allergies and this meant that I withdrew somewhat into myself and pondered issues other than football and girls. I was not often fully 'in the moment'. The way I have written this thesis, in the past tense, and often while in isolation in remote locations, might reflect this ability to withdraw from social interaction and thereby gain a different perspective. Third, when I was about 6 years old I had a strange nightmare, where the world turned red because it had become so hot, because of all the engines in the world. I'm not sure what this means, but somehow I have always been an environmentalist, which is unusual. And then, as I mentioned in the opening chapter, I was involved in youth Christianity, but became disillusioned by the rule-dependency and insecurities of so many 'practising' Christians. At the same time, I continued to believe in something other than the pursuit of self-interest, but didn't want to look at other spiritualities, because the third-dimensional power of the Church had made me think this would be 'evil.' I think this makes me angry at the way the most important ideas about life can be distorted by some people. I despair at people using higher ideals to protect their own self-interest by controlling others. For me the spiritual message was a selfless one, yet often people were surrounding themselves with ideas and concepts that made themselves feel better, rather than because they were selfless. I remember when I was 16, I went for a walk and made a decision not to bother with the Church anymore, knowing that as part of that decision, I would never forget a higher consciousness and would treat the world as my Church. And so I suppose taken together these experiences have led me to be questioning, challenging, slightly detached from the moment, globally-aware and somewhat angry.

This was my predisposition when I began researching, which may help explain why I had the potential to escape the third-dimensional power of the discourse I described. There were a number of things I did which then actually enabled me to do this. For example, I talked to people in a variety of different situations. Although I may not have agreed with them, southern trade unionists and religious leaders woke me to their realities. I am naturally inclined to do this because of my predisposition for being aware of distinct cultures with different realities. This also means that I am predisposed towards skipping between disciplines, for example by looking at structural analyses of capital and power as well as looking at environmental management literature. This is because I have little concern for becoming an expert in one particular discipline, as seems to be the norm for doctoral researchers. As I have described above, my early experiences of the Christian church mean I naturally questioned whether beliefs and practices that are presented as non-selfish and purposeful are actually just helping the people expressing them to feel better. This might be why I do not accept the emerging orthodoxy of participatory action-research, which I see as a way

of making it possible for researchers to continue their comfortable lifestyles. Given the fact I have never not been an environmentalist, and the world is my Church, I was always going to be involved as an activist as much as a researcher, even before I had worked out a way of explaining this in methodological terms. Moving to Brighton and becoming much more involved in grassroots activism was also crucial in helping me to see the sheltered and privileged existence of people who get to talk about peoples' lives as subject matter for modules and courses. My exposure to the emotion of anarchism, by which I mean self-governance, was important in giving me courage to develop the notion of our common good and then analyse everything within this context. And then finally, whereas if I had been at the University I would have been subconsciously thinking about what was expected of me (in all manner of ways from all manner of things), withdrawing from this and the western world generally helped me to configure my understanding of what I had been doing. Inspiration is coming to understand what you realise you already knew. This is what happened to me in Nicaragua.

I remain driven by the idea of not taking the easy option of intellectually comfortable opposition to social systems on the one hand, or financially comfortable participation in social systems on the other, but steering a middle course, one that is truly 'powerful' in social change. I am conscious of *the challenges of using that power* to help birth a situation where power is shared and co-created, not imposed through systems, nor through fear, nor through *self-interest, nor through laziness. I* therefore have problems with any processes that concentrate power into certain organisations and positions in those organisations. Which means I always seek to challenge power unless it is being used to enable the self-empowerment of others. I guess this makes me an anarchist. It is not a word I use, as it means nothing but 'mindless thug' to most people. The interesting thing that Rupesh asked me here was whether a power-relation was being played out in me, by the fact I have these values. Could my belief in, and action in support of, that which I call our common good actually be the result of a third-dimensional power over me? Could my analysis that others are subjected third-dimensional power actually result from me being subjected to third-dimensional power in ways that that distance me from those I have researched? I cannot really see this, although it is important to ask such questions. I have shown in this research, we should never just assume our identities as 'doers of good,' but reflect on our values and practice.

It is too soon for me to identify many lessons from my own experience for a technology of liberation, but there are some pointers on how we might live and act in ways that continue to support our, and others, liberation. Because our knowledge is fallible, and our actions will have unintended effects, especially as we access power, we must develop our critical subjectivity, by questioning our assumptions and beliefs, always seeking alternative views, and never putting our faith in fixed concepts. Moreover, we need to reflect on our intents, recognising that we are multifaceted and have different values inside. Therefore, we need to reflect on our beliefs. Could

spiritual questions be at the heart of a technology of liberation, due to the way they help us to perceive and serve our common good?

What have you found to be the most interesting aspects of this thesis, for your own questions in your own life and practice? Those friends of mine who read and commented on parts of this thesis immediately focused in on existential questions. Rupesh told me: "You actually asked the question and dared to explore the common good, which is quite unusual. Initially I was phased by what you were you trying to do because it is an uncommon question." Indeed it is a question we tend to skirt around, preferring to use terms like social justice or sustainable development, which allow people to speak of values without dealing directly with questions of existence. My finding is that we really do have to deal directly with these questions. You may remember that in Chapter 2, I attempted to identify some of the common insights of different spiritual, eco-centric as well as secular humanist perspectives. I wrote:

> *From an enlightened religious viewpoint we shouldn't adversely interfere with the spiritual journey of others - it's a sin. From the rational viewpoint of enlightened self-interest we shouldn't adversely interfere with other people as we would not want that for ourselves - it's not sensible. From an eco-centric viewpoint we shouldn't adversely interfere with others as such action prevents the full expression of life - it's an ecological malfunction. Therefore what is 'good' is to create the conditions for people to flourish in whatever way they see fit, hoping, knowing, that their growing self-awareness will lead them to share that view.*

I am taking baby steps in this work, and as I progress I will undoubtedly stumble upon more contradiction and paradox. For example, can we really say that all people who become self-aware will naturally seek to help others to do the same? Some who believe in such a strong biological determination of our thoughts and actions have a rather different view - individualist understandings of evolutionary psychology for example. And whereas eco-centric and Buddhist insights suggest we need to reconnect with our natural way of being, some religions have a less positive view of the natural world and focus on the importance of us steering a particular course in life - escaping our biology, almost. And if we do decide to conceive of the innate goodness of all, might we be in danger of ignoring the need to prepare for the worst? Perhaps the highest form of public service is not to expect it from anyone else. If so, is real democracy a potentially destructive idea?

If spiritual enlightenment is a key part of a technology of liberation, then what does this mean for our practice? A fellow Genoa-campaigner Phyllida Cox "knew some Buddhists who had big debates about whether the path as a Buddhist was more legitimate sat up a mountain becoming a bodhisattva or getting out into the world.... Somehow it all gets caught up in its-self." Therefore some Buddhists worry that their non-individualist spiritual philosophy can lead some to pursue solely self-centred spiritual experience. As poet Gary Snyder wrote "although Buddhism has a grand vision of universal salvation and boundless compassion, the actual achievement of Buddhism has been the development of practical systems of meditation toward the end of liberating individuals from their psychological hangups and cultural conditionings. Institutional

Buddhism has always been conspicuously ready to accept or support the inequalities and tyrannies of whatever political system it found itself under. This is death to Buddhism, because it is death to compassion. Wisdom without compassion feels no pain" (quoted in Calvert 1991, p. 25).

Are you at peace? If not, should you focus on finding peace, whatever that is, or get on with taking civil action? On the one hand Gotamma Buddha spent six years poncing around with self-deprivation (all in the safety of knowing he could go home to a nice warm bath, good food and servants if he got fed up) and only when he reached his state of enlightenment did he then seek to serve his fellow human beings. On the other hand Mahatmma Gandhi's spiritual practice was more outward (and political) from the start. His mind was often cluttered and stressed yet he had courage to tough that out, perhaps because he believed his own suffering was not important. Moreover, there is a tendency to think one's suffering is an indication of one's virtue. So is inward or outward practice the right way? Perhaps both are, perhaps neither. In the pursuit of the first you might not just unclutter your mind but also shut out a reality that other people live in. This would be an alienated way of living, existing in 'oneness' only at an abstract level. On the other hand, if you do the other, you might end up relying on the egotistical side of yourself, committing inward violence by suppressing, controlling and denying aspects of yourself. And by example you would be suggesting to others that the route is a tough one, rather than one of natural being. You would be reinforcing the idea to yourself and others that you are special. Is that not contradictory? Isn't the task not to be special, but to open a path to being a different kind of normal? We need to keep in mind here that one person might not be as courageous or capable as another. Or they may not have the same sense of material security. We should also remember that we might not be as strong as we tell ourselves. This is what I have had to realise. I believe in the virtue and power of self-sacrifice, but this has worn me down. In my own life I am now seeking a creative self-expression of enlightened consciousness, balanced with the 'realities' of the place where I live, and the body and mind I live within. I am an imperfect-perfect person in a perfect-imperfect world. Selflessness is still important, but it feels less like a struggle now, more like a celebration.

The key thing to note here is that there is no one way of spiritual enlightenment and practice for a civil activist. We need to embark on our own spiritual inquiries - which is what I mean by *Planetism.* No one way is good or bad - it depends on context. Spirituality is not a good or bad concept - it depends on context. Paradox lurks. If *Planetism* is to mean anything it will have to mean nothing. Our new story is that there will be many stories to unfold.

This is a spiritual insight from the concept of paradox. Yet this insight is not complete unless we recognise the problems that will arise from embracing this paradox. We need to see the paradox of paradox. For example, I seek to use paradox as a way of supporting critical subjectivity and reflective practice, and to discourage dependence on fixed concepts. Therefore I am using the concept with a civil intent. However, I have already witnessed in me the capacity to use paradox as

a way of reconciling the way my practice doesn't sit with my values. I have also seen how it has been used by some as a way of avoiding difficult choices based on principled positions. Have you heard of people talk of a need for "balance" when they mean avoiding making a principled decision, or avoiding exploring the issues in depth? Have you done this? The paradox of concepts and ideas is that they can be used for good or bad purposes. The paradox of paradox is that this idea can be used for good or bad purposes as well. Perhaps this helps us to understand how Buddhism, which is based on transcending the paradox of human thought, seems to enable some people to be happy doing nothing for the unhappy parts of their 'perfect' world.

Before finishing, I should say something briefly about implications for future research into 'civil society.' I am conscious of the almost certainty that the definition of civil society I subscribe to will be drowned out by any definition that is less challenging to people using old paradigms of positivist-empiricist research. It seems that the noisiest definition will be something along the lines of 'the sector made of organisations formed by people associating for their own reasons.' This will have negative consequences, as support for civil society participation in governance leads to greater influence from hierarchical organisations, serving the interests of capitalist firms. On the other hand, even if the definition I use becomes more popular, it could also have negative consequences, as commercial companies begin to claim they are part of civil society and further undermine our ability to see profit-taking as a selfish pursuit. Of course some commercial staff that take civil action are part of civil society, but not the for-profit enterprise itself. Therefore my work suggests that future research should focus not on sectoral relations but on relations between civil actors and those not yet engaged in that way, and explore people's internal relating of their own civil values and intents and other motives. The sectors would remain important due to the fact that organisations have purposes and hierarchies and create roles for people, but we have seen that is only part of the picture. Civil society is about people's values and intents, not just their jobs.

I should also say something about the future of civil regulation. Some clues can be found at the personal level. If we look at the private sector, I have found that it is helping to raise questions of values in the workplace and breaking down distinctions between work and life, business and beliefs. What will this lead to? One scenario is that it may lead people within business to discover the limitations of expressing their values within the current economic system. Therefore they may try and create a new system of global governance that incorporates enough of the principles of our common good without challenging absent shareholding so that it could be accepted by the powerful. New hybrid forms of companies may emerge. There are signs that this is already happening. A second scenario is that the values of those business people, once awakened, will be remoulded to fit with hierarchical, exploitative and unsustainable forms of living. Even spirituality might be redefined in practice to support business-as-usual. There are signs of this happening already. A third scenario is that these business people will drop out of business and do something else. And again, there are examples of this.

All three scenarios will be affected by environmental and social change. There is the possibility that the contradictions of global capitalism will increase, environmental pressures worsen and the global economic system implode. As the confidence of the stockmarket in the worth of strategic planning evaporates so there would be global financial meltdown. What would appear in its place would probably depend on the region concerned: liberatingly democratic societies in some places, dictatorships in others, and more-of-the-same in others (i.e. globalisation is not reaching everywhere). I was speaking to the children of this hypothetical future in the previous chapters.

Other clues to the future emerge from the civil sector. Through their work on corporate responsibility, civil group staff concerned with diverse issues, such as child labour and deforestation, will come to understand each other more, and see what values they share, by witnessing what they are distinct from. One scenario is that these civil actors will become part of the business establishment and go through one of the possible scenarios mentioned above. There is already a flood of civil group staff joining corporates to work on corporate responsibility. But the other scenario is that they will become frustrated with the lack of progress in working with companies, and leave this work with a greater understanding of the diversity of social and environmental issues affected by corporate power. They may come to realise and express their work in terms of a common set of values and beliefs. These may be the true (r)evolutionaries.

But then again, what I am guessing at is not as important as what you will take from this work. I am told that John Kieran once said "I am a part of all I have read." Nothing is known without a knower. When you look at a book you have read do you recall a feeling that you had from it? That's what I do. Your own ways of thinking will influence what you take from this. For example, on the specific research question, one reader might think 'well hey, there's change going on here, civil society is doing a job on business, it might only be 50% what activists want but something is better than nothing.' Another reader might think 'oh shit, I was hopeful that business could contribute to social progress but it seems civil society is being compromised, and the real action that's needed isn't happening.' Without an awareness or acceptance of paradox, the evidence in this thesis could confirm for them one view or the other.

I've learned from publishing two books and other papers that what I conclude doesn't seem to matter! Readers make their own interpretations and are helped to write or act in ways that they determine. (Thankfully I can't exert thought control on people). It's a great privilege to hear that my work "has inspired" people to act and innovate, but would I have acted the same way, and did my conclusions suggest such a course of action? My proposal for a Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) was taken up, but the concept changed in a crucial way, in terms of its organisational structure, which I believe is undermining its potential to promote sustainable fishing. So, your conclusions matter. They should do, as reading all the way to this point and not using the

information in some fashion would be a pity! So I began with my introduction and now it is time for your conclusions.

- What do you think of my definition of civil society? Does it work? Does it help understand what I've described happening in the various business-civil society relations? Is it important to exclude the for-profit sector in the way I have?
- What do you think of my definition of our common good? Does it mean anything for your own life and work?
- What do you think of my use of the four dimensions of power? Is it a useful way of looking at your own life and work?
- What do you think of my civil action-research methodology? Is it justifiable in academic terms? Is my concern with participatory methods valid? Is this a good bit of action-research?
- What do you think of my 'action-writing' approach, is it a valuable contribution to academic writing styles?
- What do you think of the breadth and depth of this thesis? Was it too ambitious, challenging and redefining too many concepts to make its exploration of them rather superficial?
- What might future research questions and action priorities be, based on this analysis?
- What is the first thing you are going to do in your own life and work because of this, if anything?

In my own mind I'm fairly happy that even if my conceptualisation failed and this is a poor PhD, at least I tried to do something meaningful and useful for other people embarking on this process. I might be 'wrong', but in my own mind it's the trying, and not necessarily the succeeding that matters.

So then, as Bob Marley is signing on the stereo - "You think it's the end, but it's just the beginning."

Sincerely,
Jem Bendell

The beginning of freedom is the realisation that you are not 'the thinker'. The moment you start watching the thinker, a higher level of consciousness becomes activated. You begin to realise that there is a vast realm of intelligence beyond thought... You realise that all the things that truly matter- beauty, love, creativity, joy, inner peace- arise from beyond the mind. You begin to awaken.

ANNEX II: Details of personal communications

The various research techniques and interactions discussed in Chapter 4 meant that a significant amount of data from the spoken and written word was accumulated. These personal communications took the form of speeches (from the floor or from the podium, in closed or open meetings, conferences, and seminars), letters (to me, to others), emails (to me, to others), informal comments (in the corridors of meetings, over coffee etc), telephone interviews (recorded), face-to-face interviews (recorded and unrecorded), face-to-face extended meetings and visits (unrecorded, with just myself or with others).

The way I decided to present such information was influenced by my action-writing approach. I therefore wanted to make use of all data, but realised that in certain situations I should anonymise it. I did this for those communications made directly to me in the following circumstances:
where the interview or discussion was not on the record (or specifically off-the-record), unless I approached the person afterwards asking if they had a problem with me using it. For example, many personal communications in Chapter 10 were from notes, not recordings, and the people mentioned were asked for comments on early drafts. As I mentioned in Chapter 8, this didn't always work and people asked for their words to be removed (which they were).
where the statement would obviously cause a problem to the person concerned. This is because I do not want to cause any individual harm.
where I criticise the arguments being made in the quote. I do not want to criticism to be taken as a personal rebuke, for three reasons. First, people's ideas change. Second, readers might focus on the person involved, and this detract from the argument being made. Third, I do not want to invite personal enemies and this work is critical enough to generate some negative responses, in any case. The only time I do not uphold this is where personal communications were obviously written to me in an impersonal way e.g. the email from Dole, mentioned in Chapter 8.

Some personal communications were written to groups of people, such as letters from one organisation to another. These featured prominently in Chapter 7. I treated these documents as if they were written for a public audience, as the content suggested they were written in a formal and public manner. This is a judgement on my part, of course, and influenced by the fact that the letters do much to explain the history of what was occurring at the time. The letters were provided to me openly by BananaLink. The correspondence that was written directly to me I treated as discussed above.

Unless specifically stated that the meetings were confidential, I treated speeches made at meetings and conferences as being on-the-record. Nevertheless I anonymised them if they were problematic or I was being critical (points 2 and 3 above).

In this annex I provide information on the way I generated the personal communications. As discussed in Chapter 4, I became active in the field of my research, attending meetings, organising seminars, making proposals, and providing consulting services. Therefore I was often in regular contact with many of the people who I list below as having participated in formal research events. Therefore this Annex gives a partial view of the extent of contact with these actors in the field of research.

In addition, there were a variety of people who I did not interview formally, but met through the course of my research and work and who informed my thinking.

The meetings I attended or organised were important in providing opportunities for informal discussions. Some comments from such meetings and discussions are included in the thesis, anonymised, unless I approached them, as discussed above.

My approach to the issue of how to use personal communications has not been merely to avoid alienating those I encountered during the research. As I discussed in Chapters 4 and 8, maintaining good relations with the researched, is not an ethical basis for research, and concern for this may even detract from the civil nature of the research.

I reference personal communications in the text, not as footnotes, and these therefore appear in the references, due to the use of the Endnotes software.

Face-to-face Semi-Structured Interviews and extended discussions

Please refer to the end of this annex for typical question guides for these interviews.

Name	Position (at time)	Organisation	Place	Dates
1. Paula Antezena	Researcher	Arias Foundation	San Jose, Costa Rica	June 1999
2. Yamileth Astorga	Member	AECO	San Jose, Costa Rica	17 May 1999
3. Ramon Barrantes	Director	SITAGAH	San Jose, Costa Rica	19 May 1999
4. Gilbert Bermúdez	Secretary General	SITRAP	San Jose, Costa Rica	4 May 1999 + 28 September 1999
5. Hector Brenes	Auditor	CAN	Siquirres, Costa Rica	27 April 1999
6. Felipe Carazo	Biologist	Fundacion Ambio	San Jose, Costa Rica	5 August 1999
7. Roberto Mack	Founder	Ecologica	Siquirres, Costa Rica	27 April 1999
8. Manuel Miranda	Environmental Controller	Bandeco	Guapiles, Costa Rica	April 1999
9. Hugo Ramirez	Environmental Manager	COBAL	Siquirres, Costa Rica	27 April 1999
10. Geraldo Vargas	Pastor	Diocese of Limon	Siquirres, Costa Rica	September 1997 May 1999
11. Carlos Vega	Environmental	Chiquita Latin	San Jose	25 May 1999

	Coordinator	America	and Guapiles, Costa Rica	
12. Max Valverde	Legal Adviser	Fundacion Ambio	San Jose, Costa Rica.	5 August 1999
13. Alistair Smith	Director	BananaLink	Norwich, UK	25 October 1997
14. John Foley	Head of Buying	Waitrose	Bracknell, UK	25 June 1999
15. Chris Wille	Director	CAN	San Jose, Costa Rica	28 May 1999 1 March, 2001
16. Ian Chambers	Director	Central American Office of ILO	San Jose, Costa Rica	May 1999
17. Anne-Claire Chambron	Director	Euroban	Hannover, Germany	14 June 2000
18. Teresa Fabian	Administrator	CEPAA Europe (SAI	London, UK	22 June 1999
19. Donald Murray	Managing Director	Bandeco	San Jose, Costa Rica	May 1999
20. Dieter Overmath	Director	Transfair	Hannover, Germany	June 1999
21. Don Pollard	Officer	Trades and General Workers Union (TGWU)	London, UK	December 1998
22. Marina Prieto	Director	Central American Women's Network	Managua, Nicaragua	February 2001
23. Carolina Quinteros	Director	GMIES	Managua, Nicaragua	February 2001
24. Steven Ridge	Quality Assurance Executive	Somerfield plc	Bristol, UK	2 June 1999
25. Catherina Wesseling	Professor	IRET Universidad Nacional	Heredia, Costa Rica	January 2000
26. Dan Rees	Director	ETI	London, UK	April 2000
27. Fiona Mabbutt	Project Manager	ETI	London, UK	January 2002
28. Raj Thamotheram	Ex-Director	ETI	Bristol, UK	December 1998
29. Neil Kerney	Director	ITGWU	Amsterdam, Netherlands	October 2001
30. Chris Williams	Quality Manager	C&A	London, UK	August 1997
31. Henry Betancour	Environmental Manager	Standard Fruit (Dole)	San Jose, Costa Rica	April 1999
32. Juan-Carlos Rojas	Legal Adviser	Standard Fruit (Dole)	San Jose, Costa Rica	May 1999
33. Maria Guzman	Former Director	MINAE	San Jose, Costa Rica	May 1999
34. Franklyn Paniagua	Lawyer	CEDARENA	San Jose, Costa Rica	25 May 1999
35. Tatiana Matsupura	Environmental Coordinator	Cobal	Guapiles, Costa Rica	May 1999
36. Jorge Sandoval	Deputy Director of Research	CORBANA	San Jose, Costa Rica	26 April 1999
37. Geovanni Hidalgo	Director	Eco-logica	San Jose, Costa Rica	26 April 1999
38. Victor Quesada	Manager	Aseprola	San Jose, Costa Rica	May 1999
39. Thomas Butler	Programme Assistant	The Moriah Fund	Siquirres Costa Rica	27 April 1999

Telephone interviews

I had many conversations with various stakeholders in the issues described in this thesis which I did not record, but which influenced my thinking on the issues. The following were the on-the-record, recorded telephone interviews.

Name	Position (at time)	Organisation	Date
40. Alistair Smith	Director	BananaLink	July 1999
41. David Auld	Director	Anti-Slavery International	June 1999
42. Paul Bowtell	Environmental Adviser	Asda	14 June 1999
43. Barry Coates	Director	WDM	June 1999
44. Petrina Fridd	Manager	J Sainsbury plc	July 1999
45. Rita Godfrey	Independent Consultant		10 March 2001
46. Rob Lake	Head of Policy	Traidcraft	June 1999
47. Liz Orton	Senior Policy Adviser	Christian Aid	28 June 1999
48. George Tarvit	Trade Campaign Coordinator	Oxfam	June 1999
49. Phil Wells	Director	Fairtrade Foundation	24 June 1999

Some seminars, courses, meetings and conferences attended for this research

Deliberations and conversations at the following events, during formal sessions but also informally, were essential to the research. A variety of anonymous personal communications in the text came from these.

Event Title	Organisers	Place	Date	Type
Corporate Responsibility for Environmental Protection in Developing Countries	UNRISD	Heredia, Costa Rica	Sept 1997	Academic conference
Peoples Summit	Peoples' Summit Coalition	Birmingham, UK	May 1998	Activist conference
Seminar on the Voluntary Sector	UCL School for Public Policy	London	Sept 1998	Academic seminar
ISTR 3rd International Conference	International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR)	Geneva	July 1998	Activist conference
ETI Inaugural Conference	ETI	London, UK	Dec 1998	Practitioner conference
NGOs in a Global Future	Birmingham University	Birmingham, UK	Jan 1999	Academic conference
Banana Sourcing Meeting	Asda	Leeds, UK	June 1999	Practitioner meeting
Consultation with Trades Unions	Foro Emaus	Siquirres, Costa Rica	May 1999	Practitioner seminar
Competitiveness and Sustainability in the Global Economy	IOEU	Hannover, Germany	June 1999	Academic conference
SGS-ICS SA8000 Lead Auditor Training Course	SGS-ICS	Camberley, UK	12-15 July 1999	Practitioner course
Innovacion Tecnologica y Agricultura	FUNDE	San Salvador, El Salvador	Dec 1999	Practitioner conference
Corporate Citizenship and Canadian Forestry	RIIA Chatham House	London, UK	July 2000	Practitioner seminar

4th ISTR International Conference	International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR)	Dublin, Ireland	July 2000	Academic seminar
Accountability Conference	ISEA	London, UK	April, 2000	Practitioner conference
Inaugural Meeting	ISEAL	London UK	April 2000	Practitioner meeting
Inaugural Meeting	FAO Ad hoc Working Group on Banana Production	Rome, Italy	April 2000	Practitioner meeting
Smile of Nature	ExpoWatch	Hanover, Germany	June 2000	Activist conference
Corporate Responsibility Conference	Trades Union Congress	London, UK	July 2000	Practitioner conference
Labour Party Conference Fringe Meetings (Various)	Various	Brighton, UK	Sept 2000	Practitioner seminar
Founding Forum	Global-Responsibility.com	Monaco	18 Nov 2000	Practitioner conference
Sustainable Business	HARC	Houston, US	Jan 2001	Academic Conference
Aspen Scholars Seminar	Aspen Institute	Washington, US	Feb 2001	Academic seminar
ETI Annual Conference	ETI	London, UK	2001	Practitioner conference
Gender and working conditions	Institute of Development Studies	Brighton, UK	17 May 2001	Academic Seminar
International Banana Conference	BananaLink	London UK	June 2001	Practitioner conference
Annual DSA Conference	Development Studies Association	London UK	June 2001	Academic conference
European SAI Conference	SAI	Amsterdam, Netherlands	Oct 2001	Practitioner conference
Labour Party Conference Fringe Meetings (Various)	Various	Brighton, UK	Sept 2001	Practitioner seminar
Being an Obstacle: Anti-Globalisation Conference	Institute of Contemporary Arts	London	Nov 2001	Activist conference
Academy of Management	Academy of Management	Denver, US	Aug 2002	Academic conference

Seminars organised for this research

I organised the following 3 seminars to explore issues for this research, the first two in the UK, the other in Costa Rica. Discussions and/or correspondence in preparation of, during and after these events were important aspects of the research. I list the participants to indicate the multi-sectoral nature of the events. The reports of these meetings will be available on www.jembendell.com.

"Certification for Social Development: Useful Mechanism or Waste of Time?" (3rd Meeting of The Values Network)

21 October 1997
WWF-UK, London, UK

Participants:
Niaz Alam, EIRIS; Nicola Baird, Forest Management Foundation; Michael Blowfield, Natural Resources Institute; Debbie Budden, The Body Shop International; Christine Carey, New Academy of Business; Barry Coates, World Development Movement; Marcus Colchester, Forest Peoples Programme; Elaine Dodds, Marine Stewardship Council; Adam Faruk, University of Bath; Duncan Green, Cafod; Jenny Hautmann, ILAS; Stephen Howard, World Wide Fund for Nature UK; Keith Jones, SGS Yarsley; Neil Judd, SGS Qualifor; Paul

Kingsnorth, Earth Action; Barbara von Kruedener, Forest Stewardship Council UK Working Group; Hubert Kwisthout, Ecological Trading Company; Mathew Markopoulos, Department for International Development; Mike Mason, Carbon Storage Trust; Bill Maynard, Environmental Consultant; Bill Oates, Environmental Consultant; Jim Sandom, Soil Association; Anthony Smith, Department for International Development; Jo Smith, University of Cambridge Committee for Interdisciplinary Environmental Studies; Daniel Start, Intermediate Technology Development Group; Hugh Venables, Action Aid; Phil Wells, Fairtrade Foundation; Mathew Wenban-Smith, Forest Stewardship Council; and me.

"Market-Mechanisms for Guaranteeing Sustainability and Responsibility in the International Trade in Agricultural Commodities." (4th Meeting of The Values Network)
14 January 1999
School of Public Policy, University College London, London UK

Participants:
Mick Blowfield, Natural Resources Institute; Yan Guerin, BVQI; David Crucefix, Soil Association; John Foley, Waitrose; Penny Fowler, INTRAC; Peter Frankental, Amnesty International; Liz Humphreys, IIED; Martin Gilmour, Mars Confectionery; Rita Godfrey, Body Shop International plc; Yann Guerin, BVQI; Ron Hinsley, Fairtrade Foundation; Arthur Jones, Banana Group; Keith Jones, SGS Yarsley; Alison Mabel, MAFF; Malcolm McIntosh, CEP (Europe); Peter Miller, Del Monte Fresh Produce; Don Murphy, Mars Confectionery; Rob Lake, Traidcraft; Michael Peckham, School for Public Policy; Michael Pennant-Jones, Premier Brands; Louise Punter, BVQI; Nick Robins, IIED; Hannah Scrase, FSC UK; Alistair Smith, BananaLink; George Tarvit, Oxfam; Oliver Tickell, Environmental Journalist; Rachel Wilshaw, Oxfam; and me.

"Codes of Conduct and the Banana Trade: Implications for Costa Rica"
28 September 1999
San Jose, Costa Rica

Participants:
Miriam Miranda, CINPE; Olman Segura, CINPE; Jem Bendell, CINPE; Judy Gearhart, CEPAA; David Steele, ETI; Gerardo Vargas, Foro Emaus; Hernán Hermosilla, Foro Emaus; Chris Wille , Better Banana Project, Rainforest Alliance; Ronald Sanabria, Better Banana Project, Rainforest Alliance; Víctor Quesada , ASEPROLA; Yamileth Astorga FUNDEU; María Guzmán, FUNDEU; Peter Gilmore, Standard Fruit Company (Dole); Juan Carlos Rojas, Standard Fruit Company (Dole); Carlos Murillo , Fairtrade Labeling Organisation (FLO); David McLaughinChiquita Brands International; John Goldberg, Chiquita Brands International; Martín Zúñiga, CIB and CORBANA; Oscar Bejarano, BANDECO (Del Monte); Carlos Molina, Escuela Social Juan XXIII (Solidarismo); Geovanni DelgadoECOLOGICA; Jorge Madrigal, Cámara Nacional de Bananeros; Bob Perillo, US-LEAP; Jorge Polimeni, MINAE- Bandera Ecológica; Alfonso SolórzanoMinisterio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social; Luis Umaña, ANAPROBAN; María Eugenia TrejosEscuela Economía, UNA; Gilberth Bermúdez, SITRAP; Martha Campos, APROMUJER; Diana Guzman, CANABA; Diego Low, Hannia Corrales, Emelina Corrales, CINPE; and me.

Sample interview guides:

As discussed in Chapter 4, I did not restrict myself to structured questioning, as my interviews often became extended periods of discussion about various challenges people were facing. The following two interview guides illustrate how I prepared for my interviews in Costa Rica beginning April 1999. One guide is for civil group interviews, the other for corporate staff.

Civil group staff

1 How did you come to be working at XXXXX, in your present position? Why do this?
2 How did your organisation come to be working here in Costa Rica? What is its mission, its management structure and its source of funds? (obtain the latest literature if possible)
3 Can you give some examples of illustrative projects or campaigns?
4 What do you believe to be the environmental and social issues facing Costa Rica and the region?
5 What do you consider to be the relationship between corporate activities and the issues they work on? Between markets and sustainable social development?
6 What do you believe to be are the environmental and social issues facing the banana industry?
7 What is the government doing about this? What can it do, and what cant it do?
8 What can organisations like your own do?
9 Has your organisation begun to work more on market-oriented campaigns and projects?
10 How would you describe the banana corporations relations with your organisation., with other NGOs and with unions.
11 Can you tell me of specific examples of working in collaboration with unions and/or non-Costa Rican NGOs on corporate issues?
12 Can you tell me of specific examples of working in collaboration with corporations on social or environmental issues, relating to either internal company practices or external projects?

If YES, ask the following questions for each collaboration otherwise go to question 25
13 What is the corporation you are working with?
14 What are the objectives of the collaboration, what is the commitment undertaken by the partners?
15 What was the situation leading up to this collaboration? What were your motivations? What do you think the motivations of the corporation were?
16 What do you expect to achieve? What have you achieved? Have the objectives or commitments changed since the inception of the collaboration?
17 What were the concerns or reservations before entering into this collaboration? Do they remain? Are there new ones?
18 What are the management implications of this collaboration?
19 Have there been tensions within your organisation over this engagement?
20 Have there been tensions between the collaborators – how have they been resolved?
21 How have you tried to ensure your members and support-base agree with this collaboration?
22 What are the key obstacles you have overcome, and what are the main lessons you have learned?
23 Are there critics of your collaboration, in either industry, unions or NGOs.
24 Which other corporations (in banana or other sectors) could you see yourself working with and which do you think it would be difficult or impossible to work with? Why? *Go to question 26.*

From question 12
25 Why do you think your organisation has not worked with corporations?
26 Can you tell me of specific examples of conflict with corporations on social and environmental issues? (Suggest some if they do not). How have they been resolved? Have you had any success?
27 What do you think companies are responsible for and not responsible for? Who are companies accountable to – who should they be accountable to?
28 What do you think are the respective roles of the producer government, consumer government, inter-governmental, private and civil society (unions and NGOs) organisations in promoting or ensuring the contribution of your industry to sustainable social development?
29 What do you think are the respective capacities and inclinations of these sectors to do so?

30 What are the obstacles to a situation where this industry would make a greater contribution to sustainable social development?

IF the interviewee has not raised the following issues, ask the following questions.
31 There is an ETI in the UK. Are you aware of this and is it affecting, or might it affect, business strategy?
32 Do you know about and what is your opinion on certification standards such as ECO-OK, ISO14001 and SA8000 (or at least considering them)? Deal with each in turn.
33 If you are sceptical, how might your concerns be alleviated? If you are not, how might others concerns be alleviated?
34 What do you think of the argument that all stakeholders should be involved in the development of standards?
35 What do you think of the argument that monitoring and verification need to be carried out by independent companies accredited by a multi-stakeholder accreditation body?
36 What is the key factor in the location of your plantations: wages, legal hurdles, infrastructure, inertia (fixed capital) etc?

Corporate staff:

1 How did you come to be working at XXXXX, in your present position?
2 How did your company come to be working here in Costa Rica and how is it run today? What are its ownership structure, management structure and current economic status? (obtain the latest literature if possible)
3 What are the environmental and social issues facing the banana industry, facing your company, and facing this region?
4 What can your company do about this? What is your company doing about this? What can your company not do about this? What is your company not doing about this?
5 Is your company doing more than it used to? If so, why?
6 What is the business rationale for acting on social and environmental issues? Has this changed in recent years? What is your own motivation for seeing the company address these issues?
7 How would you describe your company's relations with the independent trade unions and workers organisations (in Costa Rica and internationally)?
8 How would you describe your company's relations with NGOs (in Costa Rica and internationally; on social and environmental issues; church-based organisations)?
9 Can you tell me of specific examples of working in collaboration with unions or NGOs on social or environmental issues, relating to either internal company practices or external projects?

If YES, ask the following questions for each collaboration otherwise go to question 22
10 What is the NGO or Union you are working with?
11 What are the objectives of the collaboration, what is the commitment undertaken by the partners?
12 What was the situation leading up to this collaboration? What were your motivations? What do you think the motivations of the NGO or union were?
13 What do you expect to achieve? What have you achieved? Have the objectives or commitments changed since the inception of the collaboration?
14 What were the concerns or reservations before entering into this collaboration? Do they remain? Are there new ones?
15 What are the management implications of this collaboration?
16 Have there been tensions within the company over this engagement?
17 Have there been tensions between the collaborators – how have they been resolved?
18 Has your company involved its staff in this relationship?
19 What are the key obstacles you have overcome, and what are the main lessons you have learned?

20 Are there critics of your collaboration, in either industry, unions or NGOs.
21 Which other unions or NGOs could you see yourself working with and which do you think it would be difficult or impossible to work with? Why? *Go to question 23.*

From question 9:
22 Why do you think your company has not worked with NGOs or Unions?
23 Can you tell me of specific examples of conflict with unions or NGOs on social or environmental issues? (Suggest some if they do not). How have they been resolved?
24 How do managers in your company view this type of conflict? What do you think your company is responsible for and not responsible for? Who is your company accountable to – who should it be accountable to?
25 What do you think are the respective roles of the producer government, consumer government, inter-governmental, private and civil society (unions and NGOs) organisations in promoting or ensuring the contribution of your industry to sustainable social development?
26 What do you think are the respective capacities and inclinations of these sectors to do so?
27 What are the obstacles to a situation where this industry would make a greater contribution to sustainable social development?

IF the interviewee has not raised the following issues, ask the following questions.
28 There is an ETI in the UK. Are you aware of this and is it affecting, or might it affect, your business strategy?
29 WDM and Bananalink arranged a tour of churches, schools, NGOs and conferences in the UK for leaders of Costa Rican unions. Are you aware of this and how has it or might it affect your business? Del Monte signed an agreement with SITRAP afterwards (Do not ask Del Monte this question)
30 What are your company's motivations for being certified to standards such as ECO-OK, ISO14001 and SA8000 (or at least considering them)? Deal with each in turn.
31 What do they mean for your business operations? (for each).
32 There is a lot of scepticism over these certification systems: why do you think this is, does this affect their worth to you, and how might this scepticism be alleviated?
33 What do you think of the argument that all stakeholders should be involved in the development of standards?
34 What do you think of the argument that monitoring and verification need to be carried out by independent companies accredited by a multi-stakeholder accreditation body?
35 EUROBAN has developed a banana charter, which they presented at the Banana conference in Brussels last year. Do you support it?
36 Organic bananas took 10% percent of the market in Switzerland in a few months. Has this affected your business strategy at all?
37 What is the key factor in the location of your plantations: wages, legal hurdles, infrastructure, inertia (fixed capital) etc?

When it feels appropriate:
38 In an ideal world, if there were the resources and political will, what do you think would be the best policy solution to the environmental and social problems associated with the banana trade?

REFERENCES

Aberle, D. (1966) *The Peyote Religion Among Navaho*, Wenner-Gren Foundation: New York, USA.

Adorno, T. (2000) The Adorno Reader (edited by Brian O'Connor), Blackwell: Oxford, UK.

Agar, M. H. (1986) *Speaking of Ethnography*, Sage: Thousand Oaks, USA.

Agnew, J. (1994) "The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory," in *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 1, p. 53-80.

Ainger, K. (2001) "Empires of the Senseless," in *New Internationalist*, No. 333, April.

Alcock, J. (1993) *Animal Behaviour: A Functional Approach*, Sinauer: Sunderland, USA.

Alcoff, L., and E. Potter eds. (1993) *Feminist Epistemologies*, Routledge: London, UK.

Andrews, D., and T. Willett (1997) "Financial Interdependence and the State: International Monetary Relations at Century's End," in *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 18, No. 3, July: p. 479.

Anheier, H. (2001) "Measuring Global Civil Society," in *The Global Civil Society Yearbook*, edited by H. Anheier, M. Glasius and M. Kaldor, London School of Economics: London, UK.

Anheier, H., M. Glasius, and M. Kaldor (2001) "Introducing Global Civil Society," in *The Global Civil Society Yearbook*, edited by H Anheier, M. Glasius and M. Kaldor, London School of Economics: London, UK.

Anner, M. (2000) "Local and Transnational Campaigns to End Sweatshop Labour," in *Transnational Cooperation Among Labor Unions*, edited by M. E. Gordon and L. Turner, Cornell University Press: Itaca, USA and London, UK.

Antezena, P. (1999) Interview with Paula Antezena, while Researcher at the Arias Foundation, by Jem Bendell, San Jose, Costa Rica, June.

Appelbaum, R. , and E. Bonacich (2000) "The Key is Enhancing the Power of Workers," in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 7th. Accessed at: www.maquilasolidarity.org/resources/codes/appelbona.htm

Appelbaum, S. H., D. Hebert, and S. Leroux (1999) "Empowerment: power, culture and leadership: a strategy or fad for the millennium?," in *Journal of Workplace Learning: Employee Counselling Today*, Vol. 11, No. 7, p. 233-254.

Apthorpe, R., and D. Gasper (1996) "Arguing Development Policy: Frames and Discourse," in *European Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 8, No. 1.

Arendt, H. (1958) *The Human Condition*, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, USA.

Arias Foundation (1998) Directorio de Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil de Centroamerica (Directory of Civil Society Organisations in Central America), Fundacion Arias: San Jose, Costa Rica.

Arnstein, S. (1969) "Ladder of Citizen Participation," in *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, July.

ASEPROLA (1998) *Actualidad Laboral Centroamericana*, ASEPROLA: San Jose, Costa Rica.

Aspen Institute (2001) *The Nonprofit Sector and Business: New Visions, New Opportunities, New Challenges*, Nonprofit Sector Strategy Group, Aspen Institute: Washington, USA.

Astorga, Y. (1999) Interview with Yamileth Astorga, while member of AECO (Friends of the Earth, Costa Rica) by Jem Bendell, San Jose, Costa Rica, 17 May.

Athreya, B. (2000) "We need immediate, practical solutions," in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 7 April. Accessed at: www.maquilasolidarity.org/resources/codes/bathreya.htm

Atkinson, M. M., and W. D. Coleman (1992) "Policy Networks, Policy Communities and the Problems of Governance," in *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration*, Vol. 5, No. 2.

Auld, D. (1999) Telephone Interview with David Auld, while Director of Anti-Slavery International by Jem Bendell, June.

Axelsson, B., and G. Easton (1992) *Industrial Networks: A New View Reality*, Routledge: New York.

Bachrach, P., and M. Baratz (1970) *Power and Poverty*, Oxford University Press: New York.

BananaLink (1998) *Banana Trade News Bulletin*, No. 13/14, September.

— (2000) Banana Trade News Bulletin, No. 20, July.

Bandeco/SITRAP (1998) *Macro Agreement Between Bandeco and SITRAP*, translation by Jem Bendell, 19 December.

Barrantes, R. (1999) Interview with Ramon Barrantes, while Director, SITAGAH and Coordinator of the Coordinadora de Sindicatos Bananeros, by Jem Bendell, translation by Miriem Miranda, San Jose, Costa Rica, 19 May.
Bass, S., X. Font, and L. Danielson (2001) "Standards and Certification: A Leap Forward and a Step Back for Sustainable Development," in *The Future is Now: Equity for a Small Planet*, IIED: London, UK.
Bateson, G. (1972) *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, Intertext: London, UK.
Batliwala, S. (1993) *Empowerment of Women in South of Asia: Concepts and Practices*, quoted in *Women and Power* (1999) by J. Townsend et al, Zed Books: London UK.
Beder, S. (2000) "Global Spin," in *The Earthscan Reader in Business and Sustainable Development*, edited by R. Starkey and R. Welford, Earthscan: London, UK.
Belenky, M. F., B. M. Clinchy, N. R. Goldberg, and J. T. Mattuck (1986) *Womens Way of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice and Mind*, Harper Collins Basic Books: New York, USA.
Bendell, J. (1995) Can't see the Wood for the Trees? Corporate Green Consumerism and Tropical Deforestation, Department of Geography, Cambridge, UK.
— (1998a) *Citizens' Cane? Relations Between Business and Civil Society*, Paper presented at the 3rd International Conference of ISTR, Geneva, Switzerland.
— (1998b) "Editorial to Special Issue on Business-NGO Relations," in *Greener Management International*, No. 24.
— (2000a) Social Auditing Background Information Report for Costa Rica, BureauVeritas (Unpublished report): Costa Rica.
— (2000b) Talking for Change: Reflections on Effective Stakeholder Dialogue, Occasional Paper, Bristol, UK.
— ed. (2000c) Terms for Endearment: Business, NGOs and Sustainable Development, Greenleaf Publishing: Sheffield, UK.
— (2001a) Growing Pain? A case study of a business-NGO alliance to improve the social and environmental impacts of banana production, Funded by the Aspen Institute Nonprofit Sector Research Fund: Bristol, UK. Accessed at: www.jembendell.com
— (2001b) Towards Participatory Workplace Appraisal: Report from a Focus Group of Women Banana Workers (Occasional Paper), New Academy of Business: Bristol, UK. Accessed at: www.new-academy.ac.uk/bananas
— (2001c) "World Review," in *The Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, No. 2.
— (2001d) "World Review," in *The Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, No. 3.
— (2001e) "World Review," in *The Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, No. 4.
— (2002) "World Review," in *The Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, No. 5.
Bendell, J. , and M. Miranda (1999) *Social Audits and the Banana Industry in Costa Rica (Report of Meeting)*, CINPE, UNA: Gran Hotel de Costa Rica, San Jose.
Bendell, J., and D. F. Murphy (1997a) "New Spiderman, New Solutions," in *Green Futures*, No. 3, February/March.
— (1997b) "Strange Bedfellows: Business and Environmental Groups," in *Business and Society Review*, Vol. 98.
Bendell, J., and F. Sullivan (1996) "Sleeping with the Enemy? Environmentalist-Business Partnerships for Sustainable Development - The Case of the WWF 1995 Group," in *Business-Environmentalist Partnerships : A Sustainable Model?*, edited by R. Aspinwall and J. Smith, White Horse Press: Cambridge, UK.
Bendell, J., and E. Warner (1996) If You Cant Beat Em, Join Em! The Costs and Benefits of Partnerships with Environmental Groups: The Case of the WWF 1995 Plus Group, ERP Business Strategy and the Environment Conference, Leeds, September.
Bermudez, G. (1999a) Interview with Gilbert Bermudez, while Secretary General of the Union of Workers of Agricultural Plantations (SITRAP), by Jem Bendell, translation by Miriem Miranda, Gran Hotel de Costa Rica, San Jose, Costa Rica, 28 September.
— (1999b) Interview with Gilbert Bermúdez, while Secretary General of the Union of Workers of Agricultural Plantations (SITRAP), by Jem Bendell, translation by Miriem Miranda, San Jose, Costa Rica, 4 May.
Berry, T. (1990) *The Dream of the Earth*, Sierra Club Books: San Francisco, USA.
Biggs, S. , and A. Neame (1995) "Negotiating Room for Manoeuvre: Reflections Concerning NGO Autonomy and Accountability within the New Policy Agenda," in *Non-governmental*

organisations performance and accountability beyond the magic bullet, edited by M Edwards and D. Hulme, Earthscan: London, UK.
BizEthics Buzz (2001) *Business Ethics*, Vol. 2, No. 1, January.
Bloomfield, D., K. Collins, C. Fry, and R. Munton (1998) "Participatory Environmental Policy Processes: Experiences from the North and South," presented at *DIPs in Environmental decision-making seminar: ESRC,17th December 1998, quoted in T. Holmes and I. Scoones (2000) 'Participatory Environmental Policy Processes: Experiences from North and South', IDS Working Paper No. 113, IDS: Brighton, UK.*
Bohm, D. (1980) *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, UK.
Bojer, M. (2001) *Email from Mille Bojer, while co-ordinator of Pioneers of Change*, 30 January. Available at: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pioneers-of-change/message/620
Booth, K. , and S. Smith eds. (1996) *International Relations Theory Today*, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK.
Bovet, S. F. (1999) "The race to measure reputation," in *PR Week*, 31 May: p. 14-15.
Bowe, C., and E. Alden (2001) "US banana producers find different ways of living with EU restrictions," in *The Financial Times*, 16 February. Accessed at: http://globalarchive.ft.com/globalarchive/articles.html?id=010216001380&query=bananas#docAnchor010216001380
Bowtell, P. (1999) Telephone interview with Paul Bowtell, while Environmental Adviser, Asda, by Jem Bendell, 14 June.
Boyer, R., and D. Drache eds. (1996) *States against Markets: The Limits of Globalisation*, Routledge: London, UK.
Bradbury, H. (2001) Email from Hilary Bradbury while Professor, Case Western Reserve University, to Jem Bendell, 2 March.
Brannen, P. (1998) Presentation from Peter Brannen, while Director of the London ILO Office, at the ETI First Annual Conference, London, UK, 2 December.
Bray, J. (2000) "Web Wars," in *Terms for Endearment: Business, NGOs and Sustainable Development*, edited by J. Bendell, Greenleaf Publishing: Sheffield, UK.
Brecher, J., and T. Costello (2002) "Global Self -Organization From Below," in *ZNet*, 10 May. Accessed at: http://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/role/globdem/globprot/2002/0510below.htm
Brenes, H (1999) Interview with Hector Brenes, while an auditor for the BBP, Siquirres, Costa Rica.
Brown, L. R. (2000) *State of the World*, Worldwatch Institute: Washington, D.C, USA.
Builder, C. H. (1993) "Is it a Transition or a Revolution?," in *Futures*, March.
Burbules, N. C. (1986) "A Theory of Power in Education," in *Educational Theory*, Vol. 36, No. 2.
Burns, D. (1999) Comment by Danny Burns, while Lecturer at the University of Bristol, during Jem Bendell's MPhil to PhD upgrade discussion, Bristol, UK, June.
Bussey, J. (2000) "Labor dispute nearing settlement in Guatemala: Del Monte, banana workers sign pact," in *Miami Herald*, 21 March.
Butler, J. (1997) *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*, Stanford University Press: USA.
Calvert, G. N. (1991) Democracy from the Heart: Spiritual Values, Decentralism, and Democratic Idealism in the Movement of the 1960s, Communitas Press: Eugene, USA.
Camilleri, J. A. , and J. Falk (1992) The End of Sovereignty? The Politics of a Shrinking and Fragmenting World, Edward Elgar: Aldershot, UK.
CAN (1998) *Agroscape*, Vol. 1, No. 23, Summer.
— (1999a) *The Benefits of Certification*, Conservation Agriculture Network: New York, USA.
— (1999b) *Conservation Agriculture Network : Values and Principles*, Conservation Agriculture Network: New York, USA.
— (1999c) *Transforming Tropical Agriculture Farm by Farm*, Conservation Agriculture Network: New York, USA.
Carazo, F. (1999) Interview with Felipe Carazo, while Biologist at Fundacion Ambio, by Jem Bendell, San Jose, Costa Rica, 5 August.
Casson, M. (1998) "The Economics of Ethical Leadership," in *The Role of Business Ethics in Economic Performance*, edited by I. Jones and M. Pollitt, Macmillan Press: Basingstoke, UK.
Castells, M. (1997) *The Power of Identity*, Blackwell Publishers: Oxford, UK.
CEPAA (1999a) Applying SA8000 in Agriculture 2000/2001 Proposal, CEPAA: New York, USA.
— (1999b) Comments and Corrections Regarding the SA8000 System: A response to the June 1999 LARIC Report SA8000, CEPAA: New York, USA.

Chalmers, D. A., C. M. Vilas, K. Hite, S. B. Martin, K. Piester, and M. Segarra (1997) *The New Politics of Inequality in Latin America: Rethinking participation and representation*, Oxford University Press Inc: New York, USA.
Chambers, I. (2000) Interview with Ian Chambers, while Director of the Central American Office of the ILO, by Jem Bendell, San Jose, Costa Rica.
Chambers, R. (1997) *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the Last First*, Intermediate Technology Development Group: London, UK.
Chambron, A. C. (2000) Discussion with Anne Claire Chambron, while Director of Euroban, by Jem Bendell, Hannover, Germany, 14 June.
Chan, M-K. (1998) Floor speech by Man-Kwun Chan, while with the NRI, at the First Annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 2 December.
Chatterjee, P., and M. Finger (1994) *The Earth Brokers: Power, Politics and World Development*, Routledge: London, UK.
Chiquita (1995a) A Brief History of Chiquita Brands International, Inc, Chiquita (International) S. A.
— (1995b) *Chiquita: Questions and Answers*, Chiquita (International) S. A.
Chomsky, N. (1992) *Deterring Democracy*, Vintage: London, UK.
Chomsky, N. , and E Hernan (1994) Manufacturing consent: the political economy of the mass media, Vintage: London, UK.
Christian Aid (1997) Change at the Check Out? Supermarkets and Ethical Business, Christian Aid: London, UK.
— (1999) Taking Stock. How Supermarkets Stack Up on Ethical Trading, Christian Aid: London, UK.
Chryssides, G., and J. Kaler (1996) *Essentials of Business Ethics*, McGraw-Hill: London, UK.
Clarke, T. (2000) The emergence of corporate governance and what to do about it: A set of working instruments for social movements, International Forum for Globalisation (IFG).Committee on Corporations: USA.
Clay, E.J., and B. B. Schaffer eds. (1984) Room for Manoeuvre: An Exploration of Public Policy in Agriculture and Rural Development, Heinemann: London, UK.
Clayton, A. ed. (1996) NGOs, Civil Society and the State: Building Democracy in Transitional Societies, INTRAC: Oxford, UK.
Cleaver, C. (2001) "Institutions, Agency and the Limitations of Participatory Approaches to Development," in *Participation: The New Tyranny?*, edited by B. Cooke and U. Kothari, Zed Books: London, UK.
Clegg, S. (1989) *Frameworks of Power*, Sage: London, UK.
Clegg, S. R., C. Hardy, and W. R. Nord eds. (1996) *Handbook of Organization Studies*, Sage: London, UK.
Clifford, J. , and G. Marcus eds. (1986) *The Poetics & Politics of Ethnography*, University of California Press: California, USA.
Clifton, R. , and E. Maughan (1999) *The future of brands: Twenty-five visions*, MacMillan: London, UK.
Coates, B. (1998) Speech by Barry Coates while Director of WDM, at the First Annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 2 December.
— (1999) Telephone Interview with Barry Coates, while Director of the World Development Movement, by Jem Bendell, June.
Coca-Cola (1998) *The 1997 Coca Cola Annual Report*, The Coca-Cola Company: Atlanta, USA.
Cochrane, A. (1996) "From Theories to Practices: Looking for Local Democracy in Britain," in *Rethinking Local Democracy*, edited by D. King and G. Stoker, Macmillan: London, UK.
Cohen, J. (1995) "Interpreting the Notion of Civil Society," in *Toward Global Civil Society*, edited by M. Walzer, Berghahn Books: USA.
Cohen, J., and A. Arato (1992) *Civil Society and Political Theory*, MIT Press: Cambridge, USA and London, UK.
Colborn, T. , D. Dumanoski, and J. Peterson Myers (1997) Our Stolen Future: Are we threatening our fertility, intelligence, and survival? A scientific detective story, Abacus: London, UK.
Coleman, G. (2001) An inquiry into gender and business education: in pursuit of mother-consciousness, PhD dissertation, Bath, UK.
Collins, J. C. , and J. I. Porras (1994) *Built to last: Successful habits of visionary companies*, HarperBusiness: New York, USA.

Cone Inc. (1999) 1999 Cone/Roper Cause Related Trends Report: Evolution of Cause Branding, Cone Inc: Boston, UK.
Conger, J.A., and R.N. Kanungo (1988) "The empowerment process: integrating theory and practice," in *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 471-482.
Cooke, B. (2001) "The social-psychological limits of participation," in *Participation: The New Tyranny?*, edited by B. Cooke and U. Kothari, Zed Books: London, UK.
Cooke, B., and U. Kothari (2001) *Participation: The New Tyranny?*, Zed Books: London, UK.
Cooley, A., and J. Ron (2002) "NGO Scramble: Transnational Action and Organizational Survival," in *International Security.*, Vol. 27, No. 1, p. 1-33.
Cornell, D. (1999) Beyond Accommodation: Ethical Feminism, Deconstruction, and the Law, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: USA.
Cornil Foucaut, A. (1998) Letter from Aurelie Cornil Foucaut, Dole Europe, to John Daly, while Euroban Coordinator, 27 May.
Couzens Hoy, D. (1981) "Power, Repression, Progress: Foucault, Lukes, and the Frankfurt School," in *Tri Quarterly*, Vol. 52, p. 43-63.
Cox, R. ed. (1997) The New Realism: Perspectives on Multilateralism and World Order, MacMillan: London, UK.
Cummings, P. (1997) Letter from Pauline Cummings, while Customer Service Manager, Tesco, to Barry Coates, while Director, WDM, 6 October.
Currah, K. (2000) Email from Kelly Currah, while at World Vision, to Jem Bendell, 25 September.
Dahl, R. A. (1961) *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City*, Yale Univerisity Press: New Haven, USA.
Dahlerus, A. (1996) Letter to Roxana Salazar, Carmen Roldan, Alejandro Alvarez and Hector Brenes, Fundacion Ambio / Eco-OK, from Ann Dahlerus, while with the Swedish Society for the Conservation of Nature, 20 November.
Dawkins, R. (1989) *The Selfish Gene*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
de Rosnay, J. (1979) *The Macroscope: a New World Scientific System*, (English translation) Harper & Row: New York, USA. Accessed at: http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/MACRBOOK.html
Del Monte (1997) *In harmony with the environment*, DMFP: London, UK.
Dettke, D. (1995) "Foreword," in *Toward Global Civil Society*, edited by M. Walzer, Berghahn Books: USA.
Deveaux, M. (1996) "Feminism and Empowerment: A Critical Reading of Foucault," in *Feminist Interpretations of Foucault*, edited by S. Hekman, Pennsylvania State University Press: Pennsylvania, USA.
DfID (1998) Business Partnerships Unit Role and Responsibilities, DfID: London, UK.
Dhanarajan, S. (2000) Speech from Sumi Dhanarajan, while Policy Adviser at Oxfam GB, at the Development Studies Association Conference, SOAS, London, UK, 4 November.
Digeser, P. (1992) "The Fourth Face of Power," in *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 54, p. 977-1007.
Diller, J. (1999) "A social conscience in the global market place?Labour dimensions of codes of conduct, social labelling and investor initiatives," in *International Labour Review*, Vol. 138, No. 2.
Doane, D. (2002) *Market Failure: The Case for Mandatory Social and Environmental Reporting*, New Economics Foundation: London, UK. Accessed at: http://www.neweconomics.org/uploadstore/pubs/Reporting%20article%20March%202002.pdf
Dole (2000) Press release from Dole Food Company, August.
Dollar, D. , and A Kraay (2000) *Trade, growth, and poverty*, Development Research Group, World Bank for Globkom. Accessed at: http://www.ids.ac.uk/eldis/tgp.htm
Dryzek, J. S. (1993) "Policy Analysis and Planning: From science to argument," in *The Argumentative Turn in Policy Analysis and Planning*, edited by F. Fischer and J. Forester, UCL Press: London, UK.
Duenas, S., C. Gangotena, and M. Garces (1997) *Mujeres, Poder y Identidad, Plurimor*, Plurimor: Latacunga.
Dulude, J. (1999a) "Banana Workers, Industry: Clashing Realities," in *The Tico Times*, 30 September: p. 10.
— (1999b) "Standard Fruit Cuts Back 30%," in *The Tico Times*, 29 October. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/archive/10_29_99_6.htm
ECO-OK (1993) Environmental Standards For the Eco-OK Banana Program.
Edwards, M. (2000) *Future Positive*, Earthscan Publications: London, UK.

Edwards, M., and J. Gaventa (2001) *Global Citizen Action: Perspectives and Challenges*, Lynne Reiner: Boulder, USA.
Ekins, P. (2001) "Business, Trade and the Environment: An Agenda for Stability in World Trade," in *The Earthscan Reader in Business and Sustainable Development*, edited by R. Starkey and R. J. Welford, Earthscan: London, UK.
Ellipson (2000). Accessed at: http://www.ellipson.com/sa8000/overview/fees.html
Enloe, C. H. (2000) Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics, University of California Press: Berkeley, USA.
Entwistle, H. (1979) *Antonio Gramsci: Conservative Schooling for Radical Politics*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, UK.
Escofet, G. (1999) "C.R. Banana Producers Fight Back," in *The Tico Times*, 4 June. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/archive/06_04_99_1.htm
Esty, D. C. , and B. S Gentry (1997) *Foreign Investment, Globalization and the Environment*, Yale Centre for Environmental Law and Policy: New Haven, CON.
ETI (1998a) *Ethical Trading Initiative Website*, 1 June. Accessed at: http://www.eti.org.uk/about/framesets/f_page.html
— (1998b) "Independent Monitoring Using Local Resources," in *ETI Seminar Briefing*, No. 2, August.
— (1998c) "Working with Suppliers to Effect Change," in *ETI Seminar Briefing*, No. 3, October.
— (2000) *Getting to Work on Ethical Trading*, Annual Report 99/00, ETI: London, UK.
EUROBAN (1998) *International Banana Charter (draft)*, EUROBAN: Dublin, Ireland.
European Commission (1997) *Press Release*, 27 November.
— (2001) *Commission adopts regulation to end banana dispute*, Press release, 2 May. Accessed at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/trade/miti/dispute/bana_regul.htm
Fabian, T. (1999) Interview with Teresa Fabian, while administrator of CEPAA, Europe (SAI), by Jem Bendell, London, UK, 22 June.
Ferguson, C. (1998) *A Review of UK Company Codes of Conduct*, DFID Social Development Division: London, UK.
Finger, M. ed. (1992) *The Green Movement Worldwide*, JAI Press: Greenwich, USA.
Finkelstein, S. (1992) "Power in Top Management Teams: Dimensions, Measurement, and Validation," in *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 3, p. 505-538.
Fisher, D. , and W.R. Torbert (1995) Personal and Organisational Transformations: The true challenge of continual quality improvement, McGraw-Hill: London, UK.
Fleishman-Hillard (1999) *Consumers demand companies with a conscience*, Fleishman Hillard: London, UK.
Florini, A. M. ed. (2000) *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Washington, USA.
Foley, J. (1998) Speech from the floor by John Foley, while the Head of Buying at Waitrose, at the first annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 2 December.
— (1999) Interview with John Foley, while Head of Buying at Waitrose, by Jem Bendell, Bracknell, UK, 25 June.
Føllesdal, A. (2001) *Constructing A European Civic Society - Participation and Belonging in a Multi-Level Europe*, Dialogue Workshop - European Citizenship: Beyond Borders, Across Identities, Brussels, Belgium, 23-24 April. Accessed at: ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/improving/docs/ser_citizen_follesdal.pdf
Foro Emaus (1998a) *Bananas for the World and the Negative Consequences for Costa Rica?*, The social and environmental impacts of the Banana Industry in Costa Rica (Updated Edition), San Jose, Costa Rica, April.
— (1998b) *The Secret Accounts of a Banana Enclave*, Foro Emaus: Siquirres, Costa Rica.
Forrester, S. (1990) *Business and Environmental Groups: A Natural Partnership?*, Directory of Social Change: London, UK.
Forstater, M., and M. Burns (1997) *Open Trading*, NEF/CIIR: London, UK.
Foucault, M. (1977) "What is an Author?," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, edited by D. F. Bouchard, Cornell University Press: New York.
— (1979) Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, Vintage Books: New York, USA.
— (1980) *Power/Knowledge*, Pantheon Books: New York.
— (1986) *History of Sexuality*, Vintage Books: New York, USA.
Foweraker, J. (2001) Grassroots Movements, Political Activism and Social Development in Latin America, UNRISD: Geneva, Switzerland.

Francis, P. (2001) "Participatory development at the World Bank: the Primacy of Process," in *Participation: the New Tyranny?*, edited by B. Cooke and U. Kothari, Zed Books: London, UK.
Freire, P. (1973) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Seabury Press: New York, USA.
— (1974) *Education for critical consciousness*, Sheed & Ward: London, UK.
Freire, P.. (1982) "Creating Alternative Research Methods: learning to do it by doing it," in *Creating Knowledge: a monopoly. Participatory Research and Development*, edited by B. Hall, Society for Participatory Research In Asia: New Delhi, India.
Fresh (1997) "Comment (Editorial)," September.
Fridd, P. (1999) Telephone interview with Petrina Fridd, while manager with J Sainsbury plc, by Jem Bendell, July.
Friedman, T. (1999) *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Farrar Straus and Giroux: New York, USA.
Frooman, J. (1997) "Socially irresponsible and illegal behavior and shareholder wealth," in *Business and Society Review*, Vol. 36, No. 3.
Fukuyama, F. (1995) Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity, Hamish Hamilton: London, UK.
Furugori, M. (1997) Fax from Maria Furugori, while an independent researcher, to Harriet Lamb, while Campaigner at WDM, 10 July.
Gates, J. R. (1998) The Ownership Solution: Toward a Shared Capitalism for the Twenty-First Century, Allen Lane: London, UK.
Gaventa, J. (1980) Power and Powerlessness : quiescence and rebellion in an Appalachian valley, Clarendon Press: Oxford, UK.
— (1993) "The Powerful, the Powerless and the Experts," in *Voices of Change*, edited by P. Park, M. Brydon-Miller, B. Hall and T. Jackson, Oise Press: Ontario, Canada.
Gaventa, J., and A. Cornwall (2001) "Power and Knowledge," in *Handbook of Action Research*, edited by P. Reason and H. Bradbury, Sage.
Gereffi, G., R. Garcia-Johnson, and E. Sasser (2001) "The NGO-Industrial Complex," in *Foreign Policy*, Vol. July/August. Accessed at: www.foreignpolicy.com/issue_julyaug_2001/gereffi.html
Gergen, K. J. (1999) *An invitation to social construction*, Sage: London, UK.
Gergen, M. (1992) "Lifestories: Pieces of a Dream," in *Storied Lives: The Cultural Politics of Self Understanding*, edited by G. C. Rosenwald and R. L. Ochberg, Yale University Press: Yale, US.
Gherardi, S. (1995) *Gender, Symbolism and Organizational Cultures*, Sage Publications: London, UK.
Gibbs, A. (1998) "Focus Groups," in *Social Research Update*, No. 19, 7 February. Accessed at: http://www.soc.surrey.ac.uk/sru/SRU19.html
Giddens, A. (1984) The constitution of society : outline of the theory of structuration, Polity Press: Cambridge.
— (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity*, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK.
— (1999) "The role of the Third Sector in the Third Way," in *CAF Focus*, No. 2, p. 8.
Gill, S., and D. Law (1988) The Global Political Economy : perspectives, problems, and policies, Harvester: New York/London.
Glasius, M. (2001) "Global civil society comes of age," in *OpenDemocracy.Net*, 14 November. Accessed at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article.jsp?id=3&debateId=52&articleId=395
Global Alliance (for Workers and Communities) (2001) *Groundbreaking Study by Global Alliance Reveals Advances, Challenges Continue in Global Manufacturing*, Press Release, 22 February. Accessed at: http://www.theglobalalliance.org
Godfrey, R. (2001) Telephone interview with Rita Godfrey, while an Independent Consultant, by Jem Bendell, 10 March.
Goleman, D. (1996) Emotional intelligence: why it can matter more than IQ, Bloomsbury: London, UK.
Gonella, C. et al (1998) Making Values Count: Contemporary Experience in Social and Ethical Accounting, Auditing and Reporting, ACCA: London, UK.
Government of Costa Rica (1943) *Codigo de Trabajo (Work Code) Not. 23/8/1943*, Government of Costa Rica: San Jose, Costa Rica.
Graham, I. (1998) "Unions from Venus, CEOs from Mars? Crossing the Void in Stakeholder Communications," presented at *First Annual ETI Conference*, London, UK, 1 December.
Gramsci, A. (1971) "Selections from the Prison Notebooks," edited by and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith.
— (1988) An Antonio Gramsci Reader (edited by D. Forgacs), Schocken: New York, USA.

Graves, S., and S. Waddock (1999) "Beyond built to last: Stakeholder relations in the built-to-last companies," in *Business and Society Review.*
Gray, B., and S. Ariss (1985) "Politics and Change Across Organizational Life Cycles," in *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 10, No. 6, p. 707-723.
Green, D. (1997) *Just how clean are your shoes?*, CAFOD: London, UK.
— (1998a) Ethical Trading Initiative Consultation with Southern NGOs on Ethical Trade, Monitoring and Verification Working Group: London, UK.
— (1998b) Together we can clean up the clothes trade, CAFOD: London, UK.
Griffith, D. A., and J. K. Ryans Jr (1997) "Organising Global Communications to Minimize Private Spill-Over Damage to Brand Equity," in *Journal of World Business*, Vol. 32, No. 3.
Griffiths, M. (1995) *Feminisms and the Self: the Web of Identity*, Routledge: New York, US.
Grillo, R. (1997) "Introduction: Discourses of Development - The View from Anthropology," in *Discourses of Development: Anthropological Perspectives*, edited by R. Grillo and R. L. Stirrat, Oxford International Publications: Oxford, UK.
Guzman, M. (1999) Interview with Maria Guzman, Former Director of the National Office of Environmental Control, MINAE, Government of Costa Rica, by Jem Bendell, translation by Miriem Miranda, San Jose, Costa Rica.
Habermas, J. (1962) The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society, MIT Press: Cambridge, USA.
— (1987) The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK.
Hagen, S. (1999) Buddhism Plain and Simple: The Practice of Being Aware, Right Now, Every Day, Broadway Books: New York, USA.
Hale, Angela (1998) Speech by Angela Hale, while campaigner with Women Working Worldwide, at the First Annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 1-2 December.
Halford, S. , and P. Leonard (2001) *Gender, Power and Organisation*, Palgrave: New York, USA.
Hann, C. , and E. Dunn (1996) *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models*, Routledge: London, UK.
Harding, S. ed. (1987) *Feminisms and Methodology*, Open University Press: Milton Keynes, UK.
Hardt, G., and A. Negri (2001) *Empire*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, USA.
Hardy, C. (1994) Managing strategic action: Mobilizing change : concepts, readings, and cases, Sage: London.
Hardy, C., and L. O'Sullivan (1998) "The power behind empowerment: Implications for research and practice," in *Human Relations*, Vol. 51, No. 4, p. 451-482.
Hartman, C. L., and E. R. Stafford (1997) "Green Alliances: Building New Business with Environmental Groups," in *Long Range Planning*, Vol. 20, No. 2, p. 184-196.
Hartsock, N. (1990) "Foucault on Power: a theory for women," in *Feminism/Postmodernism*, edited by L. Nicholson, Routledge: London, UK.
Hassan, Z. (2002) *Email from Zaid Hassan*, 2 March.
Havel, V. (1985) The Power of the Powerless: Citizens Against the State in Central-Eastern Europe, Hutchinson: London, UK.
Hawken, P. (1993) The Ecology of Commerce: a declaration of sustainability, HarperBusiness: New York, USA.
Hayward, C. R (2000) *De-Facing Power*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.
Hayward, C. R. (1998) "De-facing power," in *Polity*, Vol. 31, No. 1, p. 1-22.
Healey, P. (1997) Collaborative Planning - Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies, MacMillan: London, UK.
Heap, S. (2000) NGOs Engaging with Business: A World of Difference and a Difference to the World, INTRAC: Oxford, UK.
Heap, S., and P. Fowler (2000) "Bridging Troubled Waters: The Marine Stewardship Council," in *Terms for Endearment: Business, NGOs and Sustainable Development*, edited by J. Bendell, Greenleaf Publishing: Sheffield, UK.
Heberle, R. (1949) "The Sociology of Social Movements," in *American Sociology Review*, No. 14, p. 346-57.
Heinrich, V. F, and K. Naidoo (2001) From Impossibility to Reality: A Reflection and Position Paper on the Civicus Index on Civil Society Project 1999-2001, Vol. 1, No. 1.
Held, D. (1997) "Democracy and Globalisation," in *Global Governance*, Vol. 3, No. 3.
Held, D. , A. McGrew, D. Goldblatt, and J. Perraton (1999) *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*, Stanford University Press: Stanford, USA.

Henderson, D. (2001) *Misguided Virtue: False Notions Of Corporate Social Responsibility*, New Zealand Business Roundtable: New Zealand. Accessed at: http://www.nzbr.org.nz/documents/publications/publications-2001/misguided_virtue.pdf
Henkel, H., and R. L. Stirrat (2001) "Participation as Spiritual Duty; Empowerment as Secular Subjection," in *Participation, The New Tyranny?*, edited by B. Cooke and U. Kothari, Zed Books: London.
Hernandez, C. E., and S. G. Witter (1996) "Evaluating and Managing the Environmental Impact of Banana Production in Costa Rica: a systems approach," in *Ambio*, Vol. 25, No. 3, May.
Hertz, H. (2001) The Silent Takeover: Global Capitalism and the Death of Democracy, Heinemann: London, UK.
Hildyard, N., P. Hegde, P. Wolvekamp, and S. Reddy (2001) "Pluralism, participation and power: Joint Forest Management in India," in *Participation: The New Tyranny?*, edited by B. Cooke and U. Kothari, Zed Books: London, UK.
Hill, H. (1997) Costa Rica, Americas Review 1997: The Economic and Business Report, 16th edition, World of Information: USA.
Hirst, P. (1994) *Associative Democracy: New forms of economic and social governance*, University of Massachusetts Press: Amherst, USA.
Hobbes, T. (1996) *Leviathan*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
Hollis, M. (1994) *The Philosophy of Social Science: an Introduction*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.
Holmes, T., and I. Scoones (2000) Participatory Environmental Policy Processes: Experiences from North and South, Working Paper 113, Brighton, UK.
Holst, D. (1999) Conservation Agriculture Network BBP and Fair Trade Labelling Organisation Banana Criteria: Preliminary Comparison,, CAN: New York, USA.
Howitt, R. (1998) Speech by Richard Howitt, while MEP, at the First Annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 1-2 December.
Hudock, A. C. (1999) *NGOs and Civil Society: Democracy by Proxy?*, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK.
Hudson, A. (1998) "Beyond the Borders: Organizing NGOs Transnational Advocacy," presented at *The Development Studies Association Annual Conference*, University of Bradford, 9-11 September.
Hulme, D., and M. Edwards eds. (1997) *NGOs, States and Donors: too close for comfort?*, Macmillan Press: Hampshire, UK.
Hyman, R. (2001) "Some problems of partnership and dilemmas of dialogue," in *From Collective Bargaining to New Social Partnerships: New Roles of the Social Partners in Europe*, edited by C. Kjaergaard and S. Westphalen, The Copehagen Centre: Copenhagen, Denmark.
ILO (1989) The ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy - Ten Years After, ILO: Geneva, Switzerland.
— (1999a) *Introduction to Report 316*, ILO: Geneva, Switzerland.
— (1999b) *Introduction to Report 318*, ILO: Geneva, Switzerland.
— (2000) *Sustainable Agriculture in a Globalised Economy*, ILO: Geneva, Switzerland. Accessed at: www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/techmeet/tmad00/tmadr.htm
International NGO Forum (1992) *The People's Earth Declaration: A Proactive Agenda for the Future*, International NGO Forum of the UN Conference on Environment and Development: Rio de Janiero, Brazil.
Irvine, J. (1999) Interview with Jessica Irvine while Business Partnerships Unit Manager, DFID, by Simon Heap, while researcher at INTRAC, 22 January.
Isbister, J. (2001) Capitalism and Justice: Envisioning Social and Economic Fairness, Kumarian Press: Bloomfield, USA.
IUF (2001) Banana Trade News, Towards Respect for Global Union Rights?, 23 January. Accessed at: www.iuf.org
Jahan, R. (1995) The Elusive Agenda: Mainstreaming Women in Development, Zed Books: London, UK.
Janoski, T. (1998) *Citizenship and Civil Society*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.
Jenkins, R. (2000) "Corporate Codes of Conduct: Self-Regulation in a Global Economy," presented at The UNRISD Workshop on Promoting Corporate Responsibility in Developing Countries: The Potential and Limits of Voluntary Initiatives, Geneva, Switzerland, 23-24 October.
Johnston, B. R.(ed.) ed. (1997) Life and Death Matters: Human Rights and the Environment at the end of the Millennium, AltaMira Press: California, USA.

Juma, C., and N. Clark (1995) "Policy research in sub-Saharan Africa: An Emploration," in *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 15, p. 121–137.
Kabeer, N. (1994) Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought, Verso: London, UK.
— (2001) Speech by Naila Kabeer, while Lecturer with IDS, at a seminar on gender and working conditions, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, UK, 17 May.
Kane, P. (2000) "The Play Ethic: why believe in work, when it doesnt believe in you?," in *The Observer (Life Magazine)*, 22 October. Accessed at: www.theplayethic.com
— (2001) "Stardom, the spice of liberty," in *The Observer*, 20 October.
Kant, I. (1964) *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, Harper and Row: New York, USA.
Kanter, R. M. (1999) "From spare change to real change: The social sector as beta site for business innovation [Article reprint]," in *Harvard Business Review*, No. May-June, p. 122-132.
Keane, J. (1988) *Democracy and Civil Society*, Verso: London, UK.
— (2001) "Chapter 2," in *The Global Civil Society Yearbook*, edited by H Anheier, M. Glasius and M. Kaldor, London School of Economics: London, UK.
Keck, M. E., and K. Sikkink (1998) *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, Cornell University Press: Ithaca, USA.
Kelly, L. (1988) *Surviving Sexual Violence*, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK.
Kemp, S., and J. Squires eds. (1997) *Feminisms*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
Kesby, M. (1999) Beyond the Representational Impasse? Retheorising power, empowerment and Spatiality, Mimeo.
Klein, N. (2000) *No Logo*, Flamingo: London, UK.
Knight, B., and C. Hartnell (2000) "Civil Society: is it anything more than a metaphor of hope for a better world?," in *Alliance*, Vol. 5, No. 3, p. 16-18.
Knight, B., R. Tandon, H. B. Chigudu, and G. Machel (2002) *Reviving Democracy: Citizens at the Heart of Governance*, Earthscan: London, UK.
Knuth, M. (2000) Email from Marianne Knuth, while a Coordinator of Pioneers of Change, to members of a discussion group, 19 September.
Korten, D. (1995) *When Corporations Rule the World*, Kumarian: London, UK.
Kox, H. L. M. (1998) An International Banana Agreement to Reconcile Market Benefits, Development and Ecological Sustainability, unpublished paper, Free University, Amsterdam, Netherlands.
Kuhn, T. (1970) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, USA.
Kumar, L. (2000) "Do we have a Theoretical Framework to explain Social Movement? Third System, Third Sector, Third Way - No Way," presented at *4th International Conference of ISTR*, Dublin, Ireland, 5-8 July.
Kuykendall, E. H. (1983) "Toward an Ethic of Nurturance: Luce Irigaray on Mothering and Power," in *Mothering: Essays in Feminist Theory*, edited by J. Trebilcot, Rowman and Allanheld: Totowa, USA.
La Nacion (2000) *Digital Summary*, 30 November. Accessed at: http://www.nacion.co.cr/ln_ee/english
Lake, R. (1999) Telephone interview with Rob Lake, while Head of Policy at Traidcraft, by Jem Bendell, June.
Lamb, H. (1997) Letter from Harriet Lamb, while Campaigner at WDM, to Lynsey Morgan, while Secretary of The Banana Group, 29 September.
Lamb, H., and A. Smith (1997) *Letter to Dickon Poole and John Murray*, 10 October.
LARIC (1999) *No Illusions: Against the Global Cosmetics SA8000*, Hong Kong. Accessed at: http://www.china-labour.org.hk/9907e/sa_intro.htm
Laszlo, E. (1996) The Systems View of the World: A Holistic Vision for Our Time, Hampton Press: USA.
Lather, P. (1991) Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy with/in the Postmodern, Routledge: New York, USA/ London, UK.
— (1993) "Fertile obsession: validity after poststructuralism," in *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 4, p. 673-693.
— (1997) "Validity as Incitement to Discourse: Qualitative Research and the Crisis of Legitimation," in *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, edited by V. Richardson, American Education Research Organization: Washington DC, US.

Leach, M., and R. Mearns eds. (1996) The Lie of the Land:Challenging Received Wisdom on the African Environment, James Currey: Oxford, UK.
Leipziger, D. (2001) *SA8000: The Definitive Guide to the New Social Standard*, Financial Times Prentice Hall: London, UK.
Lennon, K., and M. Whitford eds. (1994) *Knowing the Difference: feminist Perspectives in Epistemology*, Routledge: London, UK.
Lincoln, Y. (1997) *The Sixth and Seventh Moments in Qualitative Research*, Collaborative Inquiry 20, Bath, UK.
Lincoln, Y., and N. Denzin (2000) "The Seventh Moment: Out of the Past," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, Thousand Oaks: London, UK.
Lindblom, C. (1980) *The Policy-Making Process*, Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs, USA.
Lindner, K. E. (1995) Open Letter from Karl Lindner, The President of Chiquita, to the company's associates, Cincinnati, USA, 30 September.
Lipschutz, R. D., and J. Mayer (1996) Global Civil Society and Global Environmental Governance: The Politics of Nature from Place to Planet, SUNY Press: Albany, USA.
Litow, S. (2000) Corporate citizenship activities supporting corporate reputation, IBM.
Littrell, M. A. , and M. A. Dickson (1999) *Social Responsibility in the global market: Fair Trade of cultural Products*, Thousand Oaks, Sage: London, New Delhi.
Lloyd Roberts, S. (1998) Speech by Sarah Lloyd Roberst at the 1st Annual Ethical Trading Initiative Conference, London, UK, 2 December.
Locke, J. (1690/1960) *Two Treatise of Government*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.
London, S. (1995) "Teledemocracy vs deliberative democracy: a comparative look at two models of public talk," in *Journal of Interpersonal Computing and Technology*, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 33-35.
Long, F., and M. B. Arnold (1995) *The Power of Environmental Partnerships*, Harcourt Brace & Co: Orlando, USA.
Longley, S. (1998) Floor speech by Sue Longley at the 1st Annual Ethical Trading Initiative Conference, London, UK, 2 December.
Lovins, A., L. Hunter Lovins, and P. Hawken (2001) "A Road Map for Natural Capitalism," in *The Earthscan Reader in Business an Sustainable Development*, edited by R. Starkey and R. Welford, Earthscan: London, UK.
LSE (2001) Centre for Civil Society Report January 1999 - July 2000, London School of Economics: London, UK.
Lukes, S. (1974) *Power: a radical view*, Macmillan: London.
MacDonald, L. (1994) "Globalising Civil Society: Interpreting International NGOs in Central America," in *Millenium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 23, p. 267-285.
Mack, R. (1999) Interview with Roberto Mack by Jem Bendell, Siquirres, Costa Rica.
Madeley, J. (1999) *Big Business, Poor People*, Zed Books: London, UK.
Madriz, E. (2000) "Focus Group in Feminist Research," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, Sage: London, UK.
Maguire, P. (2000) "Uneven Ground – Feminisms and Participatory, Action-Oriented Research," in *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry in Practice*, edited by P. Reason and H. Bradbury, Sage Publications: London, UK.
Mansley, M., and A. Dlugolecki (2001) *Climate Change: A risk management challenge for institutional investors*, (Executive Summary), Discussion Paper No. 1, London, UK.
Maquila Solidarity Network (MSN) (2000) *Critique of the Worldwide Responsible Apparel Production, WRAP Program*, April. Accessed at: www.maquilasolidarity.org/resources/codes/wrap.htm
Marsden, C. (1999) Email from Chris Marsden, while Manager, British Petroleum, 21 May.
Marshall, J. (1999) "Living Life as Inquiry," in *Systemic Practice and Action Research*, Vol. 12, No. 2, April: p. 155 - 171.
Marx, K. , and F. Engels (1975) *Marx and Engels 1843-1844 (Collected Works) 3*, Lawrence and Wishart: London, UK.
Max-Neef, M. (1992) "Development and Human Needs," in *Real-life Economics - Understanding Wealth Creation*, edited by Ekins P. and M. Max-Neef, Routledge: London, UK.
McConnell, C., and J. Robinson (2002) *Careers Un-Ltd: How to Choose a Career That Deserves You*, Momentum: London, UK.
McGrane, B. (1989) *Beyond Anthropology*, Colombia University Press: New York, USA.
McIntosh, M. (1999) Speech by Malcolm McIntosh, while Director, CEP Europe, at The Values Network, 4th Seminar, London, UK.

McKeever, M. P. (2000) *Poverty and development: an inter-faith perspective*, World Faiths Development Dialogue: Birmingham, UK. Accessed at: www.wfdd.org.uk/
McLaughlin, D. (1999) Floor speech from David McLaughlin, while Manager with Chiquita Brands International, Gran Hotel de Costa Rica, San Jose, Costa Rica, 28 September.
— (2001) Email from David McLaughlin, while manager with Chiquita Brands International, to Jem Bendell.
McWhirter, C. , and M. Gallagher (1998a) "Better banana program under attack," in *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 3 May.
— (1998b) "Workers sprayed in the fields," in *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 3 May.
Melrose, D. (1998) Speech by Diana Melrose, while Director of Policy, Oxfam, at the First Annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 1-2 December.
Messner, D. (1998) New Perspectives of International and German Development Policy, INEF-Report 33: Duisburg, Germany.
Mies, M. (1993) "Towards a Methodology for Feminist Research," in *Social Research: Philosophy, Politics and Practice*, edited by M. Hammersley, Sage: London, UK.
Miller, K. L. (2001) "The Teflon Shield," in *Newsweek*, 12 March. Accessed at: http://stacks.msnbc.com/news/538923.asp
Mintzberg, H. (1989) Mintzberg on Management: Inside our strange world of organisations, Free Press: New York, USA.
Miranda, M. (1999) Interview with Manuel Miranda, while Environmental Controller of Bandeco, by Jem Bendell, Guapiles, Costa Rica, April.
Mohan, G. (2001) "Beyond participation: strategies for deeper empowerment," in *Participation: The New Tyranny?*, edited by B. Cooke and U. Kothari, Zed Books: London, UK.
Molina, I., and S. Palmer (1991) *The History of Costa Rica*, Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica: San Jose, Costa Rica.
Monbiot, G. (2001) Captive State: The Corporate Takeover of Britain, Pan: London, UK.
Morgan, D. L. (1997) *Focus Group as Qualitative Research*, Sage: London.
Mosse, D. (2001) "'People's knowledge', participation and patronage: operations and representations in rural development.," in *Participation: The New Tyranny?*, edited by B. Cooke and U. Kothari, Zed Books: London, UK.
Mouffe, C. ed. (1979) *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, UK.
— (1995) "Pluralism and the Left Identity," in *Toward Global Civil Society*, edited by M. Walzer, Berghahn Books: USA.
Murphy, D. F, and J. Bendell (2001) "Getting Engaged: Business-NGO Relations on Sustainable Development," in *Earthscan Reader in Business and Sustainable Development*, edited by Starkey R and R. Welford, Earthscan: London, UK.
Murphy, D. F. (1998) The Partnership Paradox: Business-NGO Relations on Sustainable Development in the International Policy Arena, Bristol, UK.
Murphy, D. F. , and J. Bendell (1999) *Partners in Time? Business, NGOs and Sustainable Development*, Discussion Paper 109, Geneva, Switzerland.
Murphy, D. F., and J. Bendell (1997a) "NGOs and the Politics of Corporate Environmentalism: Civil, Legal or Self Compliance for Sustainable Development?," presented at *Business Responsibility for Environmental Protection in Developing Countries*, Heredia, Costa Rica, June.
— (1998) "Do-It-Yourself or Do-It-Together? The Implementation of Sustainable Timber Purchasing Policies by UK Retailers," in *Greener Purchasing*, edited by T. Russell, Greenleaf Publishing: Sheffield, UK.
Murphy, D.F., and J. Bendell (1997b) In the Company of Partners: Business, environmental groups and sustainable development post-Rio, The Policy Press: Bristol, UK.
Murray, D. (1999) Interview with Donald Murray, while Vice President and Managing Director of Del Monte Bandeco S. A. (Costa Rica) by Jem Bendell, San Jose, Costa Rica.
Murray, D. L. (1995) Cultivating Crisis: the Human Cost of Pesticides in Latin America, University of Texas Press: Austin, USA.
Mytelka, L.K. (1991) Strategic partnerships and the world economy, Pinter: London, UK.
Nagai, T. (1984) *The Bells of Nagasaki*, Kodansha: Japan.
Naidoo, K. (2001) "Editorial," in *e-CIVICUS*, No. 107, 6 March.
Naidoo, K. , and R. Tandon (1999) *Civil Society at the Millennium*, Kumarian and CIVICUS: West Hartford, USA.
Neal, M., and C. Davies (1998) *The Corporation Under Seige*, Social Affairs Unit: London, UK.

Nelson, N., and S. Wright eds. (1997) *Power and Participatory Development: Theory and Practice*, Intermediary Technology Publications: Rugby, UK.
Nelson, P. (1997) "Conflict, Legitimacy and Effectiveness: Who Speaks for Whom in Transnational NGO Networks Lobbying the World Bank?," in *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, No. 26, p. 421-441.
Nerfin, M. (1987) "Neither Prince nor Merchant: Citizen - An Introduction to the Third System," in *Development Dialogue*, p. 171-195.
Newbold, Y. (2000) "Working Together for Change," in *Getting to Work on Ethical Trading - ETI Annual Report 99/00*, edited by ETI, ETI: London, UK.
Newell, P. (2001a) "Campaigning for corporate change: Global citizen action and the environment," in *Global Citizen Action: Perspectives and Challenges*, edited by M. Edwards and J. Gaventa, Lynne Rieder: Boulder, USA.
— (2001b) "Managing Multinationals: The Governance of Investment for the Environment," in *Journal of International Development*, No. 13, p. 907-919.
Newell, P., and M. Paterson (1998) "Climate for business: Global warming, the state and capital," in *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Winter.
NRI (1998) Ethical Trade and Sustainable Rural Livelihoods. Accessed at: http://www.nri.org
— (1999a) Do Criteria and Indicators Work? On-going Work in Ghana, Kenya and Zimbabwe. Accessed at: http://www.nri.org
— (1999b) Report of the Ethical Trade and Export Horticulture (Workshop), NRI: London, UK.
Offe, C. (1985) Disorganized capitalism: contemporary transformations of work and politics, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK.
Okely, J. , and H. Callaway eds. (1992) *Anthropology and Autobiography*, Routledge: London, UK.
O'Neill, J. (1998) *The Market: Ethics, Knowledge and Politics*, Routledge: London, UK.
Oommen, T. K. (1998) "Identities for Collective Action: Class, Nation, Ethnicity, and Gender," in *Contemporary Social Movements in India: Achievements and Hurdles*, edited by S. L. Raj and A. R. Choudhury, Indian Social Institute: New Delhi, India.
O'Rourke, D. (2000) Monitoring The Monitors: A Critique Of *Pricewaterhousecoopers' Labour Monitoring*, 28 September 2000. Available at: http://web.mit.edu/dorourke/www/index.html
Orton, L. (1999) Telephone interview with Liz Orton, while Senior Policy Adviser at Christian Aid, by Jem Bendell, 28 June.
Oswald, R. (1998) Speech from the floor by Ron Oswald, while Secretary General of the IUF, at the first annual ETI Conference, 2 December.
Ottaway, M. (2001) "Corporatism Goes Global: International Organizations, NGO Networks and Transnational Business," in *Global Governance*, Vol. 7, No. 3, September. Accessed at: http://www.ceip.org/files/publications/GlobalCorporatism.asp
Oxfam (2000) *Tax Havens Briefing Paper*, Oxfam: Oxford, UK.
Painter, M., and W. H Durham eds. (1995) *The Social Causes of Environmental Destruction in Latin America*, University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, USA.
Parekh, B. (1993) "The cultural particularity of liberal democracy," in *Prospects for Democracy: North, South, East and West*, edited by D. Held, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK.
Park, P. (1993) "What is Participatory Research? A Theoretical and Methodological Perspective.," in *Voices of Change*, edited by P. Park, M. Brydon-Miller, B. Hall and T. Jackson, Oise Press: Ontario, Canada.
Pashby, C. (1999) "Human-Rights Record Worse," in *The Tico Times*, 18 June. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/archive/06_18_99_3.htm
— (2000) "Immigrants Forging A New Costa Rica," in *The Tico Times*, 21 July. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/archive/07_21_00_2.htm
Patel, E. (1998) "Speech by Ebrahim Patel, while Deputy Secretary General of the Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers Union, at the First Annual ETI Conference," presented at London, UK, 2 December.
Perlas, N. (2001) *Threefolding*. Accessed at: http://www.globenet3.org/threefold.shtml
— (2002) Shaping Globalization: Civil Society, Cultural Power and Threefolding, CADI: Pasig City, Philippines.
Peters, G. (1999) Waltzing with the Raptors: a practical roadmap to protecting your company's reputation, John Wiley & Sons: Chichester, UK.
Pilger, J. (2001) *The New Rulers of the World*, ITV Programme, July.

Pinter, F. (2001) "Chapter 8," in *The Global Civil Society Yearbook*, edited by H. Anheier, M. Glasius and M. Kaldor, London School of Economics: London, UK.
Pollard, D. (1998) Conversation with Don Pollard, while Officer of the Trades and General Workers Union (TGWU), London, UK, 2 December.
Poole, D. (1997) Letter from Dickon Poole, while Marketing Manager of Del Monte Fresh Produce, UK Ltd. to Harriet Lamb, while Head of Campaigns, WDM, 29 August.
Popkin, R. H., and A. Stroll (1993) *Philosophy*, Reed Educational and Professional Publishing Ltd.: Oxford, UK.
Popper, K. (1945) *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, UK.
Powell, R.A., H. M. Single, and K.R. Lloyd (1996) "Focus Groups in Mental Health Research: enhancing the validity of user and provider questionnaires," in *International Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 42, No. 3.
Pratt, C. (1998) "Severance Pay Debate Sparks Furor," in *The Tico Times*, 30 October. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/archive/10_30_98_6.htm
— (2000a) "Banana Recession Looming," in *The Tico Times*, 13 October. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/archive/10_13_00_1.htm
— (2000b) "Businessmen Fear Downturn On the Way," in *The Tico Times,*, 30 June. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/archive/06_30_00_1.htm
Priest, O. (1957) *Utilitarianism*, Macmillan Publishing: New York, USA.
Prieto, M. (2001) Interview with Marina Prieto, while a Director of the Central American Women's Network, Managua, Nicaragua, February.
Putnam, R. D. (1993) *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press: Princeton, USA.
Quinteros, C. (2001) Interview with Carolina Quinteros, while Director of GMIES, Managua, Nicaragua, February.
Rainforest Alliance (1999) *The Canopy*, Rainforest Alliance.
— (2000) Reybancorp first to be 100% certified (Press release), New York, USA, July,.
Ramirez, H. (1999) Interview with Hugo Ramirez, while an environmental manager with COBAL, by Jem Bendell, Siquirres, Costa Rica.
Randall, R., and J. Southgate (1991) "Doing dialogical research," in *Human Inquiry: A source book of New Paradigm Research*, edited by P. Reason and J. Rowan, John Wiley: Chichester, UK.
Reason, P., and H Bradbury eds. (2001) *Handbook of Action Research*, Sage: UK.
Reason, P., and J. Rowan (1991) *Human Inquiry: A source book of New Paradigm Research*, John Wiley: Chichester, UK.
Reich, R. B. (2001) "Editorial," in *New York Times*, 18 March.
Reinicke, W. H., and F. Deng (2000) *Critical choices: The United Nations, networks, and the future of global governance*, International Development Research Centre: Ottawa, Canada.
Ridge, S. (1999) Interview with Steven Ridge, while Quality Assurance Executive at Somerfield plc, Bristol, UK, 2 June.
Riger, S. (1997) "Qué está mal con el empoderamiento?," in *Poder y Empoderamiento de las Mujeres*, edited by Magdalena Leon, Siglo Veintiuno: Bogota, Columbia.
Roberts, A. (1998) Speech by Alan Roberts, while Manager, Littlewoods, at the First Annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 1-2 December.
Robertson, J. (1990) Future Wealth: a new economics for the 21st Century, Cassell: London, UK.
Rodgers, C. (2000) "Making it Legit!," in *Terms for Endearment: Business, NGOs and Sustainable Development*, edited by J. Bendell, Greenleaf Publishing: Sheffield, UK.
Rodrik, D. (2000) Comments on 'Trade, Growth, and Poverty' by D. Dollar and A. Kraay. Accessed at: http://www.ids.ac.uk/eldis
Roe, E. (1991) "Development Narratives, Or Making the Best of Blueprint Development," in *World Development Movement*, Vol. 19, No. 4.
— (1995) "Except-Africa: Postscript to a Special Section on Development Narratives," in *World Development Movement*, Vol. 23, No. 6.
Rojas, J. C. (1999a) Email from Juan-Carlos Rojas, while Legal Adviser at Standard Fruit Company, to Jem Bendell, 21 December.
Rojas, R. (1999b) Comments made to a meeting by Mr. Rojas, while Officer of the Department of Health, translation by Miriem Miranda, Siquirres, Costa Rica, May.
Rondinelli, D. A., and T. London (2001) *Partnering for Sustainability: Managing Nonprofit Organization-Corporate Environmental Alliances*, Aspen Institute Nonprofit Sector Research Fund: Washington, D.C.

Rorty, R. (1989) *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.
Rosenau, J. (1997) Along the Domestic-Foreign Frontier: Exploring Governance in a Turbulent World, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.
Rowell, A. (2001) *Italy Prepares*, 17 July. Accessed at: www.maomagazine.com
Rowlands, J. (1995) "Empowerment Examined," in *Development In Practice*, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 101-107.
— (1997) Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras, Oxfam Publications: Oxford, UK.
Roy, H. A. (1999) "No Hiding Place," in *Management OHS&E*, April: p. 13.
Rucci, A. J., S. P. Kirn, and R. T. Quinn (1998) "The employee-customer-profit chain at Sears," in *Harvard Business Review*, January-February: p. 82-97.
Russell, P. (2001) *Global Brain Awakens*, Robson Books: London, UK.
Saddar, Z. (2000) *The Consumption of Kuala Lumpur*, Reaktion Books: London, UK.
Sahtouris, E. (2000) *The Biology of Globalisation*. Accessed at: http://www.ratical.org/lifeweb/articles/globalize.html
SAI (2001) International Standard Social Accountability 8000 (2001 Version), New York, USA.
SAI (CEPAA) (1999) *Guidance Document for Social Accountability 8000*, Version GD98-IV, New York, USA, 23rd April.
Sajhau, J-P. (1997) *Business Ethics in the Textile, Clothing and Footwear: (TCF) Industries*, Codes of Conduct, Sectoral Activities Programme Working Paper, SAP2.60/WP.110, Geneva, Switzerland. Accessed at: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/100secto/papers/bzethics/index.htm
Salamon, L. M., L. Hems, and K. Chinnock (2000) "The Nonprofit Sector: For What and For Whom?," presented at *4th Annual Conference of the International Society for Third Sector Research*, Dublin, Ireland, July 4-6.
Salamon, L. M., Anheier H. K., R. List, S. Toepler, S. W. Sokolowski, and Associates eds. (1999) *Global Civil Society: Dimensions of the Nonprofit Sector*, John Hopkins University: Baltimore, USA.
Sassen, S. (1998) *Globalization and its Discontents*, New Press: New York, USA.
— (2001) *A New Geography of Power?* Accessed at: http://www.globalpolicy.org/nations/sassen.htm
Scruton, T. (1989) *Kant*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
Sen, A. (1999) *Development as Freedom*, Oxford University Press: Oxford.
Senge, P. (1994) The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization, Currency Doubleday: New York, USA.
— (2001) Speech by Peter Senge at the Houston Advanced Research Centre (HARC) 2001 Sustainable Business Conference, Houston, USA, 29 January.
Senter, A. (1998) "Fair Trading Group aims to Bring Bigger Firms on Board," in *The Observer*, 11 January: p. 7.
Sequeria, M. (1997) "Costa Rican Banana Growers Under Fire," in *InterPress Service*, 18 October.
Seyfang, G. (1999) *Ethical Trading and Globalisation: Self-Regulation and Workers Experience*, R7298 Social Policy Research Programme, Working Paper No. 1, December, London, UK.
Shah, R. (2000) The Relationship Between Shell and Living Earth: A Learning History, Paper prepared for the Living Earth UK, Bath, UK.
— (2001a) Conversation with Rupesh Shah, while PhD student, University of Bath, Bath, UK, 27 February.
— (2001b) Relational Praxis in Transition Towards Sustainability: Business-NGO Collaboration and Participatory Action Research, PhD Thesis, Bath, UK.
Shapiro, M. J. (1991) "Sovereignty and Exchange in the Orders of Modernity," in *Alternatives*, Vol. 16, p. 447-477.
Shaw, M. (2000) Theory of the Global State: Global Reality as an Unfinished Revolution, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.
Shore, C., and J. Wright eds. (1997) The Anthropology of Policy: Critical Perspectives on *Governance and Power*, Routledge: London, UK.
Short, C. (2000) "Sharing the Benefits of Globalisation," in *Getting to Work on Ethical Trading, Annual Report 99/00*, edited by ETI, ETI: London, UK.
Shotter, J. (1993) Cultural politics of everyday life : social constructionism, rhetoric and knowing of the third kind, Open University Press: Buckingham.
Silverman, D. (1993) Interpreting qualitative data: methods for analysing talk, text and interaction, Sage: London, UK.

Simmons, P. J. (1998) "Learning to Live with NGOs," in *Foreign Policy*, Vol. 112 (Fall), p. 82-96.
Simms, A. , T. Bigg, and N. Robins (2000) Its democracy stupid: The trouble with the global economy - the United Nations lost role and democratic reform of the IMF, World Bank and the World Trade Organisation, New Economics Foundation: London, UK.
Smarzynska, B. K., and S.J Wei (2001) Pollution Havens and Foreign Direct Investment: *Dirty Secret or Popular Myth?*, World Bank: Washington, USA. Accessed at: http://econ.worldbank.org/files/2398_wps2673.pdf
Smith, A. (1997a) "Bananas - straightening up a bent world?," in *Ethical Consumer*, October/November: p. 26-29.
— (1997b) Conversation with Alistair Smith, while Director, BananaLink, 25 October.
— (1998) Speech by Alistair Smith, while Director of BananaLink, at the Peoples Summit, Birmingham, UK, 16 May.
— (1999) Telephone interview with Alistair Smith, while Director of BananaLink, by Jem Bendell, 8 July.
Smith, D. (1987) "Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology," in *Feminism and Methodology*, edited by S. Harding, Open University Press: Milton Keynes, UK.
Smith, G. , and C. Wales (1999) "The theory and practice of citizens juries," in *Policy and Politics*, Vol. 27, No. 3, p. 295-308.
Snow, C. C., R. E. Miles, and H. S. Coleman (1992) "Managing 21st Century Network Organisations," in *Organisational Dynamics*, No. Winter.
SocialFunds.com (2001) *Shareholder Resolutions Successful in Changing Employment Policies*, 26 February. Accessed at: http://www.socialfunds.com
Soros, G. (1998) The Crisis of Global of Global Capitalism: Open Society Endangered, Little, Brown and Company: London, UK.
South China Morning Post (2000) "Sweatshop Swindlers," in *South China Morning Post*, 18 December.
Spar, D. L. (1998) "The Spotlight and the Bottom Line: How Multinationals Export Human Rights," in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. March/April, p. 7-12.
Spriegel, G. (1998) Speech by Geoff Spriegel, while with J. Sainbury's plc, at the First Annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 1-2 December.
Standard Fruit Company (1998) *The Campaign of Bad Reputation in Europe [translated]*, Leaked document prepared for a seminar at the University of Costa Rica, San Jose, Costa Rica.
Stanley, L. , and S. Wise (1983) Breaking Out: Feminist Consciousness and Feminist Research, Routledge: London, UK.
— (1993) Breaking Out Again: Feminist Ontology and Epistemology, Routledge: London, UK.
Starr, A. (2000) Naming the Enemy: Anti-Corporate Movements Confront Globalization, Zed Books: London.
Steele, D. (1999) Speech by David Steele, while Information Manager with ETI, to the meeting on Social Auditing and the Banana Industry, Gran Hotel de Costa Rica, San Jose, Costa Rica, 28 September.
Stern, A. J., and T. Hicks (2000) The Process of Business Environmental Collaborations: Partnering for Sustainability, Quorum Books: Westport, USA.
Steyne, S. (1998) Speech by Simon Steyne, while with the TUC at the First Annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 1-2 December.
Storey, D. (1999) "Shell, Sponsorship, Academic Independence," in *Ethics, Place and Environment*, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 239-242.
Strange, S. (1996) The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.
SustainAbility (2001) *Buried Treasure: Uncovering the business case for corporate sustainability*, SustainAbility Ltd: London, UK. Accessed at: http://www.sustainability.co.uk/business-case/keyconclusions.asp
Sutton, R. (1999) *The Policy Process: An Overview*, Working Paper, Vol. 118, No. London, UK.
Swantz, M. J. et al (2001) "Participatory Action Research in Southern Tanzania, with Special Reference to Women," in *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*, edited by P. Reason and H. Bradbury, Sage: London, UK.
Tallontire, A. , P.Greenhalgh, F. Bee, and J. Kyamanywa (2001) *Diagnostic Study Of FLO Registered Coffee Producers In Tanzania And Uganda*, Natural Resources Institute: Chatham, UK.
Tanabe, C. (1998) "Social Power and Education," in *Philosophy of Education Yearbook 1998*. Accessed at: http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/1998/tanabe.html

Tarrow, S (1994) Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics, Cambridge University Press: New York.
Tarvit, G. (1999) Telephone interview with George Tarvit, while Trade Campaign Coordinator, Oxfam, by Jem Bendell, June.
Taylor, H. (2001) "Insights into Participation from Critical Management and Labour Process Perspectives," in *Participation, The New Tyranny?*, edited by B. Cooke and U. Kothari, Zed Books: London, UK.
Taylor, V. (2000) *Marketisation of Governance: Critical Feminist Perspectives from the South*, DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era).
Teubner, G. ed. (1997) *Global Law Without a State*, Dartmouth: Aldershot, UK.
Tewdwr-Jones, M., and P. Allmendinger (1998) "Deconstructing Communicative Rationality: a critique Habermasian collaborative planning," in *Environment and Planning A*, Vol. 30, No. 10, p. 1975-1989.
The Economist (1999) *The Economist*, 11-17 December.
The Guardian Review (2000) in *The Guardian*, 29 September.
The Tico Times (1999) "Banana Growers Trash Their Fruit," in *The Tico Times*, 16 July. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/archive/07_16_99_6.htm
— (2000a) "Banana Growers to Get Aid," in *The Tico Times*, 6 October. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/archive/10_06_00_3.htm
— (2000b) "No Solution in Sight for Banana Crisis," in *The Tico Times*, 1 December. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/business.htm
The Values Network (1999) Report of the Fourth Meeting of The Values Network, Bristol, UK.
Theobold, R. (2000) *The Fourth Story*. Accessed at: http://www.raticals.org/co-globalize/4thstory.html
Thompson, A. (1999) "Church, State and Civil Society in Latin America," in *Alliance*, Vol. 4, No. 2, June: p. 11-14.
Thorne, L. (1997) *Towards Ethical Trading Space*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Bristol, UK, June.
Tocqueville, A. de (1835/1945) *Democracy in America*, Vintage Books: New York, USA.
Torbert, W. R. (1991) The Power of Balance: Transforming Self, Society, and Scientific Inquiry, Sage: California, USA.
Touraine, A. (1983) *Solidarity: the analysis of a social movement: Poland 1980-1981*, Translated [from the French] by David Denby, Cambridge, UK, June.
Townsend, J. G., E. Zapata, J. Rowlands, P. Alberti, and M. Mercado (1999) *Women and Power: Fighting Patriarchies and Poverty*, Zed Books: London, UK.
Tucker, A. (1998) Floor speech by Albert Tucker, while Director of Twin Trading, at the Ethical Trading Initiative First Annual Conference, London, UK.
Turban, D. B., and D. W. Greening (1996) "Corporate social performance and organizational attractiveness to prospective employees," in *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 3, p. 658-672.
UNDP (1994) *Human Development Report*, Oxford University Press: New York, USA.
— (1999) *Human Development Report 1999*, Oxford University Press: New York, USA and Oxford, UK.
UNEP (2001) *Living in a Pollution-Free World a Basic Human Right*, News Release, Nairobi, Tanzania, 27 April. Accessed at: www.unep.org
United Nations (1996) *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean 1995-1996*, UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean: Santiago, Chile.
UNRISD (1995) States of Disarray: The Social Effects of Globalization, UNRISD: Geneva, Switzerland.
US Department of Labor (1999) *Implementation Experiences of Codes of Conduct in the US Apparel Industry*. Accessed at: http://www.dol.gov/dol/ilab/public/media/reports/apparel
Utting, P. (2000) Business Responsibility for Sustainable Development, Occasional Paper 2, UNRISD: Geneva, Switzerland.
— ed. (2002) The Greening of Business in Developing Countries: Rhetoric, Reality and Prospects, Zed Books: London, UK.
Valverde, M. (1999) Interview with Max Valverde, while Legal Adviser, Fundacion Ambio, by Jem Bendell, San Jose, Costa Rica, 5 August.
Van Parijs, P. (1995) Real Freedom for All: What - If Anything - Can Justify Capitalism?, Clarendon Press: Oxford, UK.

Vargas, G. (1998) "The Socio-environmental Problems of Banana Plantations in Costa Rica," in *The Secret Accounts of a Banana Enclave*, edited by Tomás Saraví, Foro Emaus: Limon, Costa Rica. Accessed at: http://www.ked-bayern.apc.de/Foremaus/secret.htm
— (1999) Interview with Geraldo Vargas, while Pastor of the Diocese of Limon, by Jem Bendell, with translation by Miriem Miranda, Siquirres, Costa Rica,, May.
Vega, C. (1999) Interview with Carlos Vega, while Environmental Coordinator, Chiquita Latin America, by Jem Bendell, San Jose and north of Guapiles, Costa Rica, 25 May.
Veltmeyer, H. (1997) "New Social Movements in Latin America: The Dynamics of Class and Identity," in *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 1.
Verduzco, M. I., and A. Reveles (2001) *The CIVICUS Index of Civil Society Project in Mexico: A Preliminary Report*, Civicus Index On Civil Society Occasional Paper Series 1 (7), Mexico.
Vogel, D. (1999) *Environmental Regulation and Economic Integration*, University of California: Berkeley, USA. Accessed at: http://www.cairnsgroupfarmers.org/ni/mfs.asp?T=Reports&C=menu.htm&M=reportspapers/1999.pdf
von Bertalanffy, L. et al (1968) *General System Theory : Foundations, Development, Applications*, George Brazillier: New York, USA.
Waddell, S. (2000) "Complementary Resources: The Win-Win Rationale for Partnership with NGOs," in *Terms for Endearment: Business, NGOs and Sustainable Development*, edited by J. Bendell, Greenleaf Publishing: Sheffield, UK.
Wahl, P. (1998) "NGO-Transnationals, McGreenpeace and the Network Guerrilla: On some recent trends in international civil society," in *Peripherie*, Vol. 71.
Warshaw, S. (2000) *Interview with Steve Warshaw, while CEO of Chiquita Brands International, during "Your Business" on CNN*, 12 December. Available at: http://www.cnn.com/video/indepth/2000/12/12/chiquita.warshaw.cnn.html
WDM (1997a) Del Monte challenged to clean up its act (Press Release), London, UK, 15 August.
— (1997b) *Press release*, London, UK, 9 September.
— (1997c) Saying yes to the best - Justice for banana workers, WDM: London, UK.
— (1997d) "Under their Skins: The Truth about the Banana Business," in *Action*, No. 9, September.
WDM and Bananalink (1997a) Letter written by WDM and Bananalink to Dicken Poole, while Manager of Del Monte Fresh Produce UK, 3 September.
— (1997b) Report on meeting with Del Monte Fresh Produce UK, Conway Hall, London, UK, 3 September.
Weedon, C. (1987) *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, Basil Blackwell: Oxford, USA.
Weiser, J., and S. Zadek (2000) Conversations with Disbelievers Persuading Companies to Address Social Challenges, Brody, Weiser, Burns: Mass., USA.
Welford, R. (1997) Hijacking Environmentalism: corporate responses to sustainable development, Earthscan, UK: London, UK.
Wells, P. (1999) Interview with Phil Wells, while Director of the Fairtrade Foundation, by Jem Bendell, 24 June.
Wesseling, C. (2000) Conversation with Catherina Wesseling, while Professor of IRET, Universidad Nacional, Heredia, Costa Rica, January.
Wheatley, M. J. (1998) *Reclaiming Gaia, Reclaiming Life.* Accessed at: www.margaretwheatley.com
Wheatley, M. J. , and M. Kellner-Rogers (1998) *The Community of the Future*, Jossey-Bass: USA.
White, H. (1998) Speech by Elaine White, while Director of Verite, at the First Annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 1-2 December.
White, P. (1983) *Beyond Domination*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, UK.
Whorf, B. L. (1956) *Language, thought, and reality; selected writings*, Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Cambridge.
Wille, C. (1998a) "Conservation Certification: A New System," in *Agroscape*, No. 1, Summer.
— (1998b) Letter by Chris Wille, while Director of BBP, in response to IBIS Trade Group criticisms of BBP, 4 November.
— (1999a) Email by Chris Wille, while Director, Conservation Agriculture Network, to Jem Bendell, 18 August.
— (1999b) "Field Report - Columbia : Transforming Tropical Agriculture," in *The Canopy*, March/April.

— (1999c) Interview with Chris Wille, while Director of the Conservation Agriculture Network Secretariat, by Jem Bendell, San Jose, Costa Rica, 28 May.
— (2001) Conversation with Chris Wille, while Director of the Conservation Agriculture Network, 1 March.
Wilson, J. (1998) "Del Monte Sidesteps Banana Skin Pile," in *Financial Times*, 20 February: p. 3.
Winter, M., and U. Steger (1998) Managing Outside Pressure: Strategies for Preventing Corporate Disasters, John Wiley & Sons: Chichester, UK.
Wolkoff, L. (2000) "Pesticide Ban Urged," in *The Tico Times*, 24 November. Accessed at: http://www.ticotimes.net/archive/11_24_00_5.htm
World Monitors (2001a) *eMonitors*, No. 106, 14 February.
— (2001b) *eMonitors*, No. 108, 28 February.
— (2001c) *eMonitors*, No. 112, 28 March.
WTO (2001a) *Doha WTO Ministerial 2001: EC - Banana Imports, WT/MIN(01)/16,*, World Trade Organisation: Geneva, Switzerland. Accessed at: http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/min01_e/mindecl_ec_bananas_e.htm
— (2001b) "Ministers grant waiver to ACP-EC Partnership Agreement," in *Focus*, No. 55, December. Accessed at: http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/focus_e/focus55_e.htm
WWF (1999) Foreign Direct Investment and environment: from pollution havens to sustainable development. Report from the OECD Conference, WWF-UK: Paris, France.
Wymer, W. (2001) Email from Walter Wymer to Jem Bendell, 16 February.
Yanacopulos, H. (1999) "Development NGO Advocacy - New Forms of Alliances and Networks," presented at *NGOs in a Global Future*, University of Birmingham, UK, 10-13 January.
Zadek, S. (1997) "Civil Partnerships for Social Cohesion," presented at *Partnerships for Social Cohesion Conference*, Copenhagen, Denmark, 6-18 October.
— (1998) Closing speech by Simon Zadek while the Interim ETI Chair, at the First Annual ETI Conference, London, UK, 2 December.
— (1999) "Can Corporations be Civil?," presented at *NGOs in a Global Future Conference*, Birmingham, UK, 10-13 January.
— (2001) *The Civil Corporation*, Earthscan: London, UK.
Zadek, S. , and M. Forstater (1999) "Making Civil Regulation Work," in *Human Rights Standards and the Responsibility of Transnational Corporations*, edited by M. Addo, Kluwer: Hague, Netherlands.
Zadek, S., S. Lingayah, and S. Murphy (1998) *Purchasing Power: Civil Action for Sustainable Consumption*, NEF (New Economics Foundation): London, UK.
Zuniga, M. (1999) Floor speech from Martin Zuniga, while Officer with Consejo de Industria Bananera, CIB, Gran Hotel de Costa Rica, San Jose, Costa Rica, 28 September.